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Kent on Sunday

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Mid edition No 671

IMMIGRATION

KCC struggles to care for migrants

Council asks for cash to help with young refugees

COMMUNITY

Still in the dark over lighting

Just when you thought the streets would be lit again

TRAFFIC NIGHTMARE

Blowing our Stacks

How long do we have until everything grinds to a halt?

HEALTH

Drug craze is no laughing matter

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How much longer will county be slave to Stack?

OVER the last few weeks the county has been brought to grinding halt, after grinding halt. The never ending, never relenting strain of Operation Stack, and the traffic chaos it generates dominating not only the headlines, but people's lives as well.

Just over a week ago the county's politicians celebrated, announcing – following an emergency meeting – that a contraflow system would be put in place.

Just days later that system was shot down by the very Government agency, Highways England, which was supposed to be implementing it.

This raised a number of questions: Not least quite why the various assorted politicians at County Hall and in Parliament hadn't quizzed the experts on whether it would be feasible in the first place.

And so we end this week with another 'emergency solution' just around the corner according to the politicians.

You can't help but be cynical, and question whether this time something will actually happen to get Kent moving forward again, or whether once more, we're simply at the mercy of the rhetoric of the MPs.

It brings to mind another long-running transport thorn – that of Manston Airport in Thanet.

Before the election, the hotly contested Thanet South seat was a pilgrimage for top Conservative Party politicians, all keen to be seen to be doing something about the county. Promises that Manston was – like Operation Stack – a top priority wooed the electorate, bringing about a resounding Tory win.

Yet despite those assurances from the transport minister, and also the Prime Minister himself, nothing yet, has happened to bring the airport back into use.

We can only hope that an Operation Stack solution is that little bit closer, and this time, it's not just empty talk.

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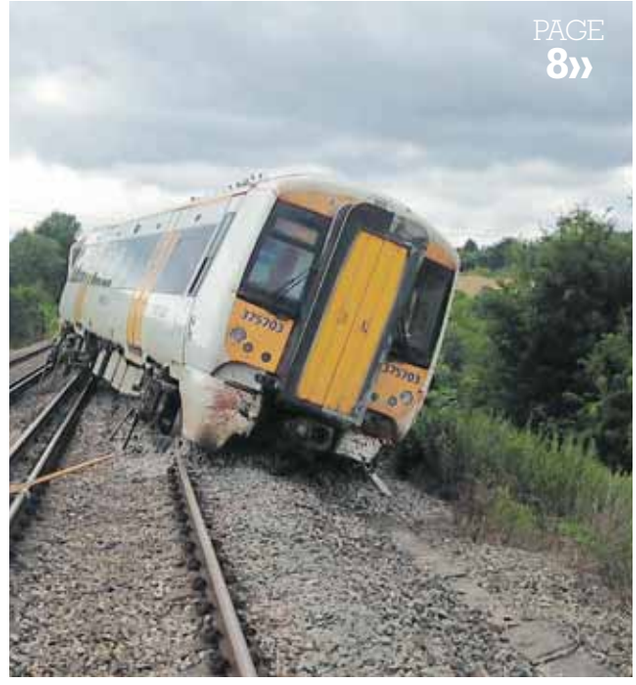

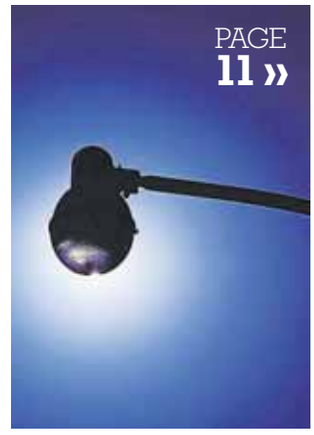

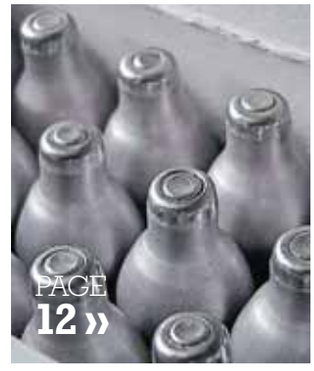

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seven days

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Council struggles with rise in migrant children

Jamie Weir
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STRAIN: Children's social services are creaking under the weight of unaccompanied migrant children

UNACCOMPANIED migrant children, travelling from Calais are placing serious strain on local services, according to Kent County Council leader Paul Carter.

The Conservative Party councillor met with the Home Office to discuss the problem, which has risen significantly over the past year, and shows signs of worsening.

Local authorities have a legal duty to provide care for unaccompanied youths who arrive in their area.

Kent has often found that it bears the brunt of this as many travel to Britain across the Channel, arriving either at the Port of Dover, or at the Eurotunnel terminal in Folkestone.

Cllr Carter said: "I have met with the Home Office to discuss both the impact of Operation Stack as well as the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children entering the Port of Dover and Kent County Council's duty of care to provide for them.

"It is putting enormous strain on our children's social services."

The number of young asylum seekers arriving in Dover has grown steadily, with 238 recorded a year ago rising to 369 in April.

However the past six months have seen the numbers accelerating fast, with problems in Calais likely to have contributed to the latest rise in the figure of youths aged under 18 requiring care from the county council.

Cllr Carter said: "We are now caring for 605 under 18s and face a shortfall of £5.5 million in costs to care for them."

According to the council leader, it isn't simply the financial costs which are causing the local authority problems.

As more children – often from war-torn countries like Syria and Iraq – arrived at Dover, safe spaces to care for them are becoming an issue.

He said: "Staff are working flat out to support these vulnerable young people through our reception centres and we are urgently looking at new premises in order to expand the facilities."

Despite the problems, Cllr Carter said that KCC was working hard to deal with the issues, and had resolved to put in place arrangements to help manage the problems of a lack of space, and also funding in Kent.

Cllr Carter said: "We are now working with the Association of Directors of Children's Services to come to a dispersal arrangement outside of Kent as we need places across the country where they can go after assessment."

Local MEP bites back after brutal killing of famous lion Cecil

SOUTH east Lib Dem MEP Catherine Bearder is campaigning to ban trophy hunting imports after the brutal killing of Zimbabwean lion Cecil.

He was found headless and skinned on the outskirts of Hwange National Park at the beginning of July.

The hunter, American dentist Walter Palmer, has boasted of killing a host of endangered animals with a bow and arrow. He allegedly paid around £32,000 to kill Cecil, who was tempted out of the park using bait, then shot. He took 40 hours to die.

The lion was well-known and enjoyed human contact. His death has sparked outrage on social media and among conservation groups.

"He never bothered anybody," said Johnny Rodrigues, the head of Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force. "He was one of the most beautiful animals to look at."

Under EU rules, importing lion hunting trophies is only supposed to be permitted from countries where hunting can be shown to be legal and sustainable. However it continues to be legal to import lion trophies from some African countries despite a lack of scientific data on the number of surviving lions there.

Now Ms Bearder has tabled an urgent parliamentary question to the European Commission calling for lion trophy imports into the EU to be banned.

She said: "The shooting of Cecil the lion was tragic and cruel, but it has at least shone a spotlight on the absurdity of the current situation.

"Despite the number of lions across Africa plummeting in recent years, hunters are still allowed to import lion hunting trophies into the EU from several African countries. In countries where there is no recent and independent data on lion populations imports of hunting trophies into Europe must be immediately banned.

"In the long-term, I want to see the EU follow the lead of Australia and ban all imports of lion hunting trophies to end this abhorrent practice."

County's cops join forces with Met to fight crime

KENT Police has joined forces with the Metropolitan Police Service to launch a new crime fighting coalition – Project Alliance.

Project Alliance is a joint Bexley Borough and Kent Police initiative, aiming to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and increase satisfaction and confidence in the police - across borders.

Superintendent Nicola Faulconbridge, of Kent Police, said: "Project Alliance gives us the opportunity to strengthen our links and jointly target criminals to help keep Kent a safe place to live. Together we are stronger and committed to cracking down on offenders who have no regard for the misery they cause to victims living in Kent and London."

Drivers set to reap benefits of Dartford Crossing work

MAJOR roadworks to update the Dartford Crossing are now complete.

Dartcharge – the new remote payment system – was implemented last November, but building work to remove the old payment booths was ongoing.

Completing the work means drivers should now reap the full benefits of Dartcharge.

Project director Nigel Gray said: "Dart Charge has already brought significant improvements to the 140,000 journeys that are made at the Dartford Crossing every day. From today, journeys are set to improve further still, with four lanes in each direction all operating with a 50mph speed limit.

"It is a significant milestone for the project."

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

Kent cancer expert discovers chemo booster

A SCIENTIST from the University of Kent is part of a team which has discovered a drug that could be used to treat deadly lung and pancreatic cancers,

Research undertaken by Michelle Garrett, along with others, has shown in human cancer cells and in mice that the drug boosts the effectiveness of conventional chemotherapy.

The drug, discovered at the Institute of Cancer Research, London (ICR) and known as CCT245737, is scheduled to begin first-in-human clinical trials in patients with lung and pancreatic cancers – two cancers with low survival rates.

Professor Garrett joined the University of Kent's school of biosciences in 2014.

After weeks of Stack hell PM wades in pledging to resolve issue as 'priority'

Maria Chiorando
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THE Ministry of Defence could be drafted in to help combat Operation Stack hell.

Operation Stack, where parts of the M20 are shut and used as a lorry park for overspill freight traffic, has blighted the county's roads for the last few weeks.

Now land around Folkestone, owned by the MOD, is being considered as a temporary parking space, easing pressure on the roads.

The proposal was discussed at an emergency government Cobra meeting was held on Friday morning to discuss ongoing migrant issues in Calais.

Mr Cameron said: "To help hauliers and the people of Kent we will do all we can to get the queues moving.

"Sorting this situation out is an absolute priority."

Another meeting was held in Maidstone to discuss strategies to beat the traffic problem.

Kent MPs Helen Whately, Damian Green and Damian Collins attended, along with KCC cabinet member for environment and transport Matthew Balfour, Highways England, Kent Police and the Operation Stack minister Harrogate MP Andrew Jones.

MISERY: Stack continues

This latest meeting followed one a week ago, where a contraflow system on the north bound carriageway was proposed.

Traffic chiefs from Highways England later decided not to implement the system, calling it 'dangerous' and 'unworkable'.

According to Faversham and mid Kent MP Ms Whately: "The good news is that Highways England agreed to look again at the contraflow option.

"It is committed to answering the transport minister's demand to come up with a plan to keep the M20 flowing in both directions.

"We should have an answer by Wednesday.

"The other MPs and I have pressed very hard that we need an immediate alternative. Highways England are feeling the heat – there's a lot of frustration they haven't come up with a solution."

A spokesman for Highways England said: "It was a fruitful meeting, and there are a number of options we will be looking into."

VIOLENT: Hoskins

Ramsgate brute caged after attack

A Ramsgate man who assaulted two people in a house in Ramsgate and then returned later to steal from them has been jailed for three-and-a-half years.

Dean Hoskins, 29, of Stirling Way, was sentenced when he appeared at Canterbury Crown Court on July 23.

He had previously pleaded guilty to two charges of assault and one charge of burglary at an earlier court hearing.

On February 21, Hoskins barged his way into a house in Upper Dumpton Park Road and started searching the rooms looking for one of the victims, a man, who he grabbed by the hair and started to punch in the face.

Hoskins then punched his second victim, a 24-year-old woman, causing her to fall back and hit her head against the wall.

Other witnesses managed to get Hoskins out of the house.

He returned around three hours later and demanded to search the rooms again.

When he was interviewed by police he denied all offences and couldn't explain why the two victims were left with injuries. However he admitted them in court.

Detective Constable Clive Horne said: "The sentence served to Hoskins reflects the severity of his actions."

Canterbury business 'named and shamed'

CANTERBURY-based business Pro-Force Ltd, has been 'named and shamed' by business minister Nick Boles, for failing to pay workers the minimum wage.

The business, which specialises in agricultural recruitment, is said to have shortchanged 25 of its workers by a total of £1,280.99.

The news comes as Government says it is 'determined' that everyone who is entitled to the National Minimum Wage (NMW) receives it.

Business minister Nick Boles said: "As a one nation government on the side of working people we are determined that everyone who is entitled to the National Minimum Wage receives it.

"When the new National Living Wage is introduced next April (2016) we will enforce robustly.

"This means that the hard-working people of the UK will get the pay rise they deserve."

From October of this year, the NMW will increase to £6.70.

No green light for Waterside Park plan

PROPOSALS to create an industrial development off the M20 at junction 8 have been refused.

An appeal was launched following refusal of the plans by Maidstone Borough Council and a planning inquiry launched in May.

The appeal was made by Gallagher Properties Ltd, Automotive Distributors Ltd and Marden-based firms Scarab Sweepers.

Planning inspector Katie Peerless said in her decision: "The proposed loss of this green field site is clearly controversial. It is strongly opposed by all the local parish councils, the county council, the CPRE, the Kent Downs AONB Executive and Natural England.

"Considerable environmental harm would result from the loss of this area of countryside to development through the combined impact on the landscape setting of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the heritage assets."

KCC has consistently objected to major commercial development at M20 junction 8 and strongly opposed the proposals for Waterside Park.

Green Flags fly over our leading parks

THIRTY Kent parks have won prestigious Keep Britain Tidy Green Flag awards this week.

Nationwide, 1,582 parks and green spaces picked up the quality mark.

Among them were the likes of Calverley Grounds and Dunorlan Park in Tunbridge Wells, Riverside Country Park in Gillingham, the Great Lines in Chatham, the Royal Military Canal in Hythe, Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park near Faversham, Swanley Park, Pegwell Bay Country Park, and Mote Park in Maidstone.

That's in addition to two Green Flag community awards for projects by the Bearsted Woodland Trust and Whatman Park in Maidstone.

A Keep Britain Tidy spokesman said: "A Green Flag flying overhead is a sign to the public the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities."

Tonbridge council saw awards for Leybourne Lakes and Haysden Park. A spokesman said: "We're absolutely delighted."

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Energy plant shelved to make way for £2bn Paramount park

By Maria Chiorando
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A MAJOR hurdle for work to progress on the £2billion London Paramount Resort on the Swanscombe Peninsula has been overcome.

Teal Energy had wanted to build what it described as an 'energy recovery plant' on an area of land required for the ambitious entertainment complex.

The £100m plant would have turned waste into energy.

Originally proposed in 2010, it been given the green light in 2014 by Kent County Council, before it was called in by the then communities secretary, Eric Pickles, later that same year, delaying the process.

But just a week before a public inquiry into the application, which Paramount bosses told the new communities secretary, Tunbridge Wells MP Greg Clark could threaten its enormous investment, a deal was reached and Teal has agreed to shelve its plans.

The inquiry has now been cancelled, and Teal agreed to seek an alternative site.

Paul Sadler, chief executive of Teal Energy, said: "The Swanscombe Peninsula will be transformed as a result of London Paramount and the Ebbsfleet Garden City. Teal Energy is keen to find an alternative site in north Kent."

ATTRACTION: London Paramount Resort will be one of Europe's top crowd-pullers

This gives added impetus to the London Paramount Entertainment Resort proposals following the recent purchase of Bamber Pit and Essenden Sports Ground.

The amusement park, which will be built on the Swanscombe Peninsula, is due to open in 2020, subject to its planning application being approved.

Developers claim the resort would cost £2bn to build, and create around 27,000 new jobs.

It will feature a Disneyland Paris-rivalling theme park, using big names from Hollywood studio Paramount, plus thousands of hotel rooms, entertainment venues and areas for industry too.

It is expected to pull in millions of visitors each year and become one of Europe's premier attractions.

David Testa, chief executive of London Paramount, said: "We're delighted to have reached an agreement with Teal - without doubt this is another important step in the right direction for the future of the project."

Motorist killed after crashing in cop chase

THE Independent Police Complaints Commission says it will not pursue a probe into a police chase which resulted in a fatal crash in Rochester last weekend.

An investigation was launched after a man being pursued after failing to stop for police in Delce Road. He subsequently crashed in Maidstone Road. Named locally as Peter O'Reilly and in his 40s, he hit a wall.

Crackdown goes up a gear over bikers

MOTORCYCLISTS using their machines illegally are being told they face having them destroyed as police crack down on problems in the East Malling area.

Officers say they will not hesitate in seizing machines if found to cause a nuisance or contravene the law.

Crash closes bridge

THE Sheppey Crossing was closed southbound this week after a crash just days after the speed limit on the controversial road was slashed to 50mph to make it safer.

Three cars and a motorcycle crashed into one another on Monday afternoon.

Critics claim the layout of the road obscures the view and there is no hard shoulder or lighting.

Cows killed as train derailed after smash near to Chilham

FIVE cows were killed and more than 70 passengers had to be led to safety after a train was derailed on Sunday night.

The 8.10pm train from Charing Cross to Ramsgate was travelling close to 70mph when it struck the herd which had strolled onto the track between Wye and Chilham.

The force of the impact knocked the front carriage from the tracks. None of the 72 passengers were injured.

As emergency services rushed to the scene, a ladder was put up to allow passengers to exit the train before they were led to safety and gathered at Godmersham Village Hall.

The stricken carriage had to wait for a specialist crane to arrive in order for it to be lifted clear of the tracks to allow for recovery.

Some reports suggested a warning had been received by Network Rail, which is responsible for the tracks, some 90 minutes before the crash. But that after Southeastern ran one service at reduced speeds, it was decided to resume services.

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch spent the week conducting a preliminary examination before deciding if to launch a full probe.

Family pay tribute to duo who died on Alpine road

THE parents of the two young men killed during a rally across the Alps have this week made moving tributes.

Danny Hall, 25, and Josh Robinson, 22, both from Ashford, were thrown clear of their blue Seat Leon as it apparently crashed through a barrier and tumbled 1,312 feet from the Grossglockner High Alpine Road near the village of Fusch.

The road is notorious for its tight bends boasting more than 30 hairpin bends.

They were taking part in an event called The Great European Rally, which is more road trip than high speed jaunt.

Described by organisers as 'not a race', it took in seven countries over eight days and some of the Continent's most spectacular roads with competitors driving any road legal car. It started in Belgium and ended in Hungary.

Mr Robinson's mother Jenny described the friends as "like brothers". She said: "He was my wonderful son. I cannot believe you're gone. You will always be in my heart."

His father Marcus added: "I can't sleep for crying. Goodnight son, good night, nothing can hurt you now. You will always be my little boy."

His mother added: "My wonderful son. Love you so so much, can't believe you're gone. You will always be in my heart."

The alarm was raised when another driver taking part reported that they had not met him at an agreed rendezvous point.

Cyclist in serious smash

POLICE are looking for witnesses after a serious smash in Sittingbourne left a cyclist hospitalised.

A bike crashed into a white lorry on the A2 Key Street at the roundabout with Keycol Hill at around 3.45pm on July 29.

Witnesses can call 01622 798538.

Spay to avoid kittens

ANIMAL charities are once again reminding people to spay and neuter their pets.

Mandy Cotter, of Cat Chat, says: ''We have heard from several shelters this kitten season who are absolutely over-run with kittens.'' Visit www.catchat.org to find out about low-cost neuter and spay options.

Culture awards open

NOMINATIONS are now open for Medway Council's culture, design and tourism awards 2015 for any individual or groups who have contributed to the area's cultural vitality.

To find out more, go to www.medway.gov.uk. Closing date is August 28.

Mental health events

A SERIES of events will be held in Gravesham to help raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing in young people.

The Grand will host a seven-a-side football tournament on August 6 in partnership with KCC. For more information you can email youth.worker@thegrand.org.uk.

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Top Three Stories

1. Holiday traffic hell

The county faces yet more Operation Stack

2. Cows killed by train

Southeastern derailed by animals on line

3. Dartcharge complete

All the major roadworks finally finised

The Essential Guide:

Dartcharge

All you need to know http://bit.ly/1JTq8At

FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Last weekend saw hordes of music fans brave the rain to watch some iconic performers at the 20th Ashford Create Festival. The festival, which is free to attend, was headlined by 80s muso Adam Ant. See inside for more information.

Miss last week's...

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Top Three Blogs

1. Why cats are jerks

An ode to our furry little friends

2. Cecil changes the world

How the death of one big cat united millions

3. Backseat driver rage

But they could soon be a thing of the past

Results of the *KoS* Online Poll

Should live exports be banned?

1	Yes	98%
2	No	1%
3	No, but improve conditions	1%
4	Don't know	0%

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Still in the dark about when the lights will turn on

The future of all-night street lighting in the county seemed to be assured when, in March, Kent County Council – facing mounting public pressure – announced it was to be reintroduced but, as **Chris Murphy** discovers, this may not be the case...

A ROW has once again erupted over the switching off of street lights across Kent.

Liberal Democrats at County Hall, Maidstone, say a Conservative promise that all-night lighting will return has been broken.

In December 2013 in a bid to save money, Kent County Council (KCC) introduced energy saving measures which saw some street lights switched off from midnights to 5.30am.

The street lights are to be eventually replaced with LED lights in a £40 million scheme that will cut power use.

In March at a Prime Minister's question time-style session, county councillors submitted pre-written questions on the matter to which the council's cabinet members respond with pre-written answers.

But there is confusion over when the LEDs will be introduced and whether the lights will still be turned off overnight.

A public consultation is now also on the cards, giving residents three choices on the future of the county's street lighting.

Lib Dem councillor for Maidstone South Cllr Brian Clark is furious with Conservative Matthew Balfour, who represents Malling Rural East.

A question was posed on part-night street lighting and a petition with more than 10,000 signatures called Right to Light, demanding the lights go back on, was debated.

In his prepared answer at the March meeting, Cllr Balfour wrote: "Going forward, we have said that all-night lighting will return as part of the proposal to convert the county council's entire stock of street lights to LED.

"Conversion will begin in late 2015/early 2016 with residential areas being done first. This element of the works will take 12 months to complete, the entire scheme will take three years to implement."

But during the actual meeting the Liberal Democrat claims Cllr Balfour did not say the words: "Going forward".

Cllr Clark explained: "Whether he said 'going forward' or not, the rest of the statement suggests a complete end of the switching off of lampposts overnight.

> **"All the other members have since been speaking with residents in our areas reassuring them that the lights will be coming back on"**
>
> **Brian Clark,**
> Lib Dem for Maidstone South

"All the other members have since been speaking with residents in our areas reassuring them that the lights will be coming back on."

Then at a more recent meeting of the Environment and Transport Committee, the waters were muddied a little more.

Cllr Clark said: "Now we understand there will be a full public consultation later this year to consider three different options.

"The whole thing has been so confused by a simple statement that suggested full night lighting is coming back soon.

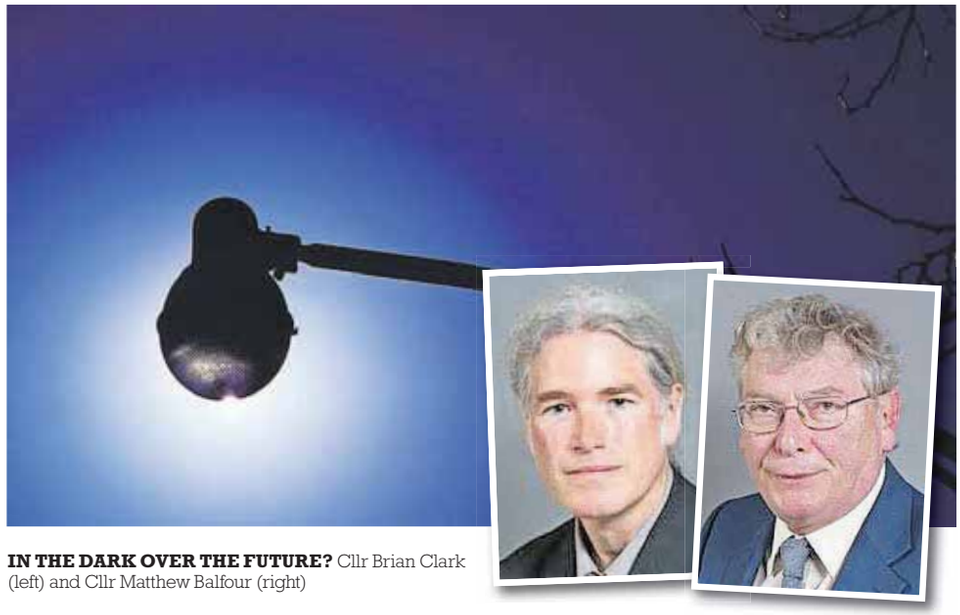
"As if all that wasn't enough, even the consultation looks utterly flawed.

"We are now being told there are three options that will be considered once an all-new and costly conversion from sodium lights to LEDs is completed."

The options are the continuation of part night lighting, where lights are turned off from midnight to 5.30am; restoration of all night lighting dimmed by 50 per cent; or the return to all night lighting.

Cllr Clark said: "The crazy thing is, we are told that one of these options will be adopted across the whole county. That makes no sense as highly populated urban areas will have completely different needs to rural areas with low populations."

Explaining the situation, Cllr Clark said: "This new problem emerged in a review of KCC's lighting policy for the energy saving LED lamp roll out during the recent Environment and Transport Committee.



IN THE DARK OVER THE FUTURE? Cllr Brian Clark (left) and Cllr Matthew Balfour (right)

"It removes an assurance on all-night lighting which county members have, in good faith, been publicising to residents across the county. We have been telling people worried about their lights going out that they will all be back on soon. It turns out, that was in fact wrong.

"KCC now plans to take three options for future street lighting policy to public consultation, from which the option chosen will be a one size fits all for the whole of Kent."

He added: "By asking the public to choose one of three options, there is an assumption that one size fits all.

"The demographics of Kent are much more complicated – what works in a scenic rural location is unlikely to work in a dense urban setting. We are paying for a complex LED central control system with every light in Kent separately adjustable, then we plan to make them all have the same setting.

"This paper makes no mention of the criteria for how this decision is to be made and will do little to overcome public concern."

He added: "The reality is that the administration has wasted a fortune rushing in part-night lighting on obsolete streetlamps.

"In fact, the money saved in turning these lights off has been wiped out because a piece of hardware has had to be fitted to each one. Basically, we have been spending more money on lampposts that are out of date.

"Beyond this, processes have been set up without any flexibility to reflect the diverse needs of Kent's population, and we still see a refusal to face up to how bad this policy has been for residents, whether they wish to have all night lighting or not."

Campaigner Tina Brooker, a legal secretary from Gravesend, created the Right to Light petition and has been on marches calling for all lights to be switched back on.

She told us: "KCC had put its residents in a position where they were reliant on becoming victims of crime and high crime statistics in order to get back a service they pay for and which had been taken away without their knowledge or consent.

"The fight to get Kent's streetlights reinstated has been going on for well over a year now and many discrepancies and misleading statements have come to light."

When contacted, Cllr Balfour suggested we go through the KCC media department.

In a statement, the authority said: "The consultation due to start next month into the current street lighting policy is separate to the planned roll out of LED conversion, though it will inform the process of how the lights will operate.

"There will be three options: Part night lighting – current level of service (12am to 5:30am), all night lighting but with a dimmed profile and a return to all night lighting.

"The conversion to LED will go ahead, as announced at the meeting in March.

"The consultation on the policy will run from late August for eight to ten weeks until October and will provide residents information about each of the options being put forward, including the costs or savings associated with each of these."

BOOMING: These little metal cylinders have often been found in our town centres and parks and are a clear sign of the increased use of nitrous oxide

Teen's tragic death brings surge in use of 'laughing gas' into focus

Jamie Weir examines rise in use of nitrous oxide and just how authorities are tackling its popularity

ATTEND any major outdoor music festival, or even many of our parks, and the chances are you will find, littering the ground, dozens of small metal cylinders.

They are the detritus of a new craze which is growing in popularity among young people, is legal, and last weekend is believed to have been responsible for the death of an 18-year-old party-goer in former Kent, now London, borough Bexley.

The substance contained within the cylinders is nitrous oxide – more commonly known as laughing gas.

But experts say the use of the gas, used frequently in dentist surgeries and in professional kitchens, is fast becoming no laughing matter amid mounting concerns over its impact on health.

Today, many youngsters refer to it instead as 'hippy crack'.

And it is available, over the counter, in many stockists.

Among them Northfleet-based UK Skunkworks, which has branches in Canterbury.

The company refused to comment when Kent on Sunday contacted it, stating that it had nothing to say on the issue of nitrous oxide abuse.

Most commonly inhaled by users, the gas can lead to euphoric feelings as well as laughter. UK Skunkworks website states that youngsters can use the product for 'cream parties'.

That's because one of its legitimate uses is in kitchenware designed to dispense whipped cream.

That, and other legitimate everyday uses, have made it extremely difficult to ensure that the nitrous oxide which is sold at retailers doesn't end up being abused by users.

Despite that, Kent Police says that it will crack down on shops which sell it to younger users.

Acting Inspector Garry Brimson said: "Although there are some pockets of use, the misuse of nitrous oxide is currently not a substantial problem in Kent.

"Sadly, the more people use this substance, mistakenly thinking that it is harmless, the more incidents of harm and death will come to our notice. We would strongly advise people to steer clear of this and all new psychoactive substances [legal highs], and we will take robust action against any licensed premises linked to its use."

Nigel Downes is the coordinator for Maidstone Street Pastors – a group which work in the town centre to provide emotional, spiritual and practical support to those in need.

He told KoS that the use of 'hippy crack' by youngsters on nights out in Maidstone had been a serious problem in the past – one of the pockets of use Kent Police had identified.

He said: "We used to find evidence of it everywhere in Maidstone, with empty silver canisters used for taking the gas littering certain parts of the town.

"It was a big problem, however we have seen less evidence of its use recently. That certainly doesn't mean people have stopped using it, but it may have moved elsewhere, or maybe the people who were taking it regularly have moved onto something else now."

The drug has a massive following among users in the 16 to 24-year-old age group, with Government figures from the Home Office showing that around 470,000 young adults used it in 2014. That made it the second most popular drug, topped only by cannabis.

Steps have been taken in some industries to discourage abuse of the gas. The nitrous oxide which is used to boost an engine's performance in motorsports often has a small amount of sulphur dioxide – which has a rancid smell – added in the gas to discourage inhalation of it.

Kent County Council's director of public health, Andrew Scott-Clark, told KoS: "Although this substance is not illegal, that does not mean it is safe to use and people need to be aware of its uses and abuses.

"However it is important to note that it is illegal to sell nitrous oxide to under 18s if the shopkeeper is suspicious that young people intend to inhale the substance."

And the law is starting to catch up, with the Home Office recently announcing its blanket ban on new psychoactive substances would include nitrous oxide – while not disrupting its legitimate uses.

The ban will mean that anyone buying, selling or taking the drug could be jailed for up to seven years.

Minister of state for policing, crime, criminal justice and victims, Mike Penning, said the rules would help police tackle the use of nitrous oxide.

He said: "Young people who take these substances are taking exceptional risks with their health and those who profit from their sale have a complete disregard for the potential consequences. That's why we are targeting the suppliers.

"The landmark bill will fundamentally change the way we tackle new psychoactive substances – and put an end to the game of cat and mouse in which new drugs appear on the market more quickly than government can identify and ban them."

The new bill is something which Canterbury MP Julian Brazier is happy about. The Conservative MP has long campaigned against the use of so-called legal highs.

Mr Brazier told KoS: "I strongly welcome this clampdown, and the tightening up of regulations to make sure people don't take these substances.

"It can only be a good thing that drugs like this will no longer be as easily accessible for abuse, and it's great news that the police will now have the powers required to tackle this issue head on."

Those new powers could help to save lives, with use of the gas as a recreational drug growing in the past few years.

KCC's Mr Scott-Clark added: "If a person inhales nitrous oxide, it has a number of risks associated with it including dizziness, falling over, unconsciousness or death due to lack of oxygen.

"It is particularly hard to judge the amount you are taking and this also makes it dangerous."

RISKS AND DANGERS...

THE rise of nitrous oxide is sparking considerable concern among health chiefs – so what exactly is making youngsters turn to what is better known as laughing gas for a kick?

The most obvious effect of nitrous oxide use is to make those taking it laugh. Users also experience short lived feelings of euphoria, relaxation and calmness.

It can also make them dizzy, and lead to difficulty in making decisions and thinking straight.

Hallucinations have also been reported when taking a large quantity of the gas.

So what are the dangers associated with 'hippy crack' use?

Because of the effect it has on the users' judgement, nitrous oxide abuse can make them place themselves in danger and increase the risks of people hurting themselves. Those taking nitrous oxide also put themselves at risk of unconsciousness or even death from lack of oxygen. However there are also longer term dangers associated with its regular use. People who take the drug frequently can end up with a deficiency of vitamin B12.

That can cause them serious nerve damage, which in some cases causes tingling and numbness in fingers, toes and other extremities and can also lead to difficulty walking. Frequent use can also lead to users bodies not making enough white blood cells, causing a form of anaemia.

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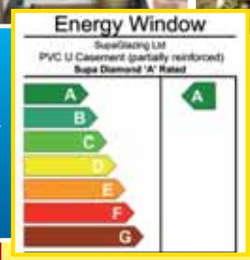

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Froome win fuels a boom in renewed love of cycling

Chris Murphy on how the British cyclist's latest Tour de France victory will help even more dust off their two-wheeled machines in pursuit of fun, fitness and the open road

CHRIS Froome's magnificent repeat triumph on the Tour de France is helping spearhead a huge surge of interest in cycling with one major venue saying competitive numbers have rocketed more than 25 per cent so far this year.

The British rider, 30, competing for the Sky team, wore the prestigious leader's yellow jersey for much of the final stages of the gruelling race and was crowned 2015 champion on the streets of Paris last Sunday.

It comes two years after his first triumph in the race in 2013 and makes him the most successful rider in British history.

The county's biggest cycling facility is the purpose-built Cyclopark in Gravesend

It offers everything from road tracks to BMX courses and mountain bike trails.

Park boss Laurence Tricker said the impact of the Tour will further fuel its popularity: "Chris Froome's win can only help to raise the profile of cycling in the UK inspiring more people to get on their bike and I'm confident that cycling as a sport will continue to grow.

"So far for 2015, we have seen a growth of 26 per cent on competition events and 42 per cent in personal challenge events, known as sportives.

"The season for sportive events seems to be getting longer – ranging in all different shapes and sizes, from charity rides to the real challenging grit rides. The park already attracts many male riders; our focus over the last year has been to grow the provision for women's cycling and children."

Froome wasn't the only British interest with an unprecedented 10 British riders competing.

From the 22-year-old first timer Adam Yates, to Olympic gold medallists Geraint Thomas and seasoned sprinter Mark Cavendish.

They join an impressive array of British cyclists fast becoming household names, and following in the footsteps of the likes of Sir Bradley Wiggins, who not only won the Tour in 2012, but then followed it up with golden glory at the London 2012 Olympic Games too.

Mr Tricker said this, combined with increased media coverage, means the sport is picking up new fans both young and old, adding: "Cycling is now one of the most popular sports in the UK and at Cyclopark park we are seeing more people taking up recreational cycling, whether its road, mountain biking or BMXing."

Sports England's Active People Survey reports over two million people ride a bike at least once a year, of which over half a million are women.

Cyclopark said it is no stranger to this trend has also experienced consistent growth since it opened in 2013.

Mr Tricker said: "The increasing interest in women's cycling is a really positive sign. At the park, the CycloFemme sessions have proved an ideal route for women to get into the sport and build their confidence.

"It is rewarding to see women turn up at the park who have not cycled for some time, grow in confidence over the weeks through the support of the CycloFemme coaches all the way through to perhaps entering their first event for example a charity ride or sportive."

Kent is no stranger to the Tour de France of course, having last hosted a stage of the race back in 2007. Then

INSPIRING: When Chris Froome, bottom left, won last weekend he became the first British cyclist to win cycling's most gruelling and celebrated event twice; an impact felt keenly at Gravesend's Cyclopark facility

some three million people took to the street across one weekend in Kent and London to watch the event. It is thought it invested some £15m into the county's economy.

Road racing is also an exciting spectacle and there are many ways to get involved with cycling whether you are just starting out or coming back to the sport after a break, they said.

Anthony Muir, coach at the park said: "Even toddlers are getting in on the act. We have seen an increasing interest in balance bikes, typically for toddlers through to four year olds.

"I expect to see many more parents bringing their mini Froomes down over the next few weeks. Riders can then progress to our Cyclowhizz after school club, where children learn key skills and gain knowledge to help them ride confidently and safely."

Tim Read, head of transportation at Kent County Council, said the Tour de France awakens people's thoughts about getting in the saddle and sees interest increase in bike rides organised by the council.

Along with British Cycling, it has in recent years been promoting Sky Ride, a series of events designed for all abilities

He said: "Cycling's never been more popular, and whatever your age or fitness level, it's easy to get involved. These rides are guided and free. Whether you're a family, regular rider, enthusiast, or someone whose bike is gathering dust in a shed, these are a great way to discover Kent's fantastic countryside. I urge everyone to get on board."

Stewart Kellett is British Cycling's director of recreation and partnerships.

He added: "The rides have already begun and run every weekend throughout the summer, so there's no time like the present to get your bike out.

"Whether you want to build your cycling confidence or already comfortable on a bike and looking for a challenge, now's the time to register your free place on a Sky Ride Local bike ride in Kent."

And in Medway, public health officer Hazel Gallagher also leads cycling and walking groups around the area and loves the French race.

She said: "I really do hope Chris Froome's incredible Tour de France win will encourage more people to get into cycling. It's a great activity that you can enjoy alone or as part of a group, and it's a wonderful way to stay healthy. We run lots of cycling groups here in Medway all led by experienced and trained volunteer cycle leaders who are always happy to advise on which routes are suitable for different abilities. Free cycle lessons are also available."

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Military tested on me at Porton Down

Alan Moultrie reveals how he became top secret guinea pig

THE fact I volunteered to be a human guinea pig at the Ministry of Defence chemical research establishment at Porton Down more than 60 years ago, now fills with me with horror at my stupidity.

But that is with the benefit of hindsight.

At the time, 1951, I was half way through my two-year National Service with the Royal Air Force.

One day, an intriguing notice went up inviting airmen to take part in some research, for which they would receive a small payment and a 72-hour leave pass. There was no mention of chemicals or any experimental weapons. I had never heard of Porton Down.

I volunteered. This was contrary to the forces' credo of 'never volunteer for anything'.

When I arrived at Porton Down on Salisbury Plain I was surprised at the high level of security, but not alarmed by it.

I was taken to a laboratory where there were several white-coated men, whom I thought were doctors. There were also several captive white rabbits with tubes sticking out of them.

A metal tube was pressed into a pad of indelible ink and then on to the palm of my left hand and forearm, making two-inch-diameter circles.

A machine whirred and then deposited a blob of colourless liquid in the centre of each circle. I stayed in the laboratory until the liquid had dried on my skin. I was told that on no account must I wash those areas until given permission.

Over the next two or three days, and sometimes in the middle of the night, I was recalled to the laboratory, where my circled areas were placed under a machine. At first, this clicked furiously, but gradually slowed on each subsequent visit.

I now assume that the machine was a Geiger counter and that I had been made radioactive.

Back at the billet we realised that the airmen had been exposed to a variety of unpleasant experiments, and stories circulated about some of them going seriously wrong.

One was that a group of airmen, only some wearing gasmasks, were put into ah gas chamber. Rumour had it that some had become blind. There was also talk of an airman having died after an experiment, but that it had been hushed up.

I was glad to get out of the place. But I had to sign the Official Secrets Act before I left.

I have been one of the fortunate volunteers, apparently suffering no after effects. I went on to enjoy a fulfilling career, a good marriage and have three healthy children and four grandchildren.

But it was wrong of the Government to encourage volunteers without making them aware of the type of research being undertaken.

Now 83, Alan Moultrie lives in Ashford.

EXPERIMENTS

LAST week, KoS ran a report on a new book penned by a University of Kent professor looking at some of the tests ran on servicemen during the 1950s at the Porton Down military complex in Wiltshire.

The book revealed how some soldiers volunteered to take part - often for a little extra cash - to have tests carried out. These would often include seeing their reaction to poisons or other chemicals they want to use as potential future military weapons.

Alan Moultrie contacted KoS after reading our report and wanted to share his experiences with our readers.

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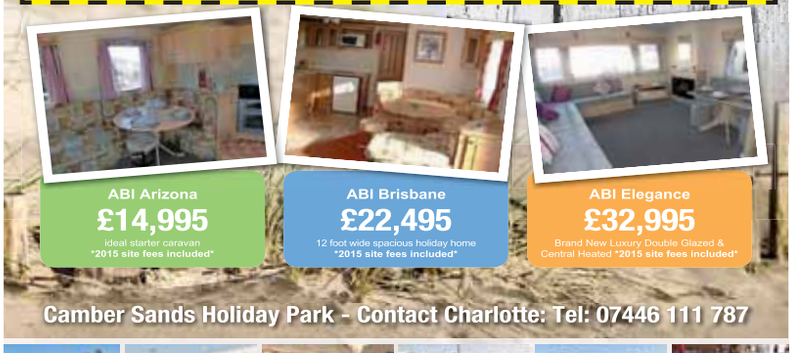

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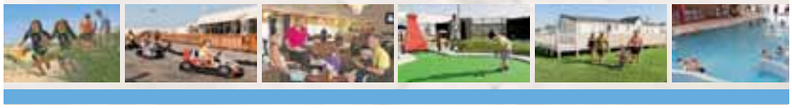

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TOGETHER: Steve Dymond and his wife Su Gorman outside their home in Broadstairs. Both are determined to continue the fight for justice for all victims of this terrible scandal

We will keep fighting for justice in contaminated blood scandal

Steve Dymond and Su Gorman write for KoS on living a life under a dark blood contamination cloud

FRIDAY, July 24 was a red letter date in our diary.

It should have been the happiest day of our lives. At least since the joyous day in 1980 when we celebrated our wedding with our friends and family with a party that lasted all day and was supposed to last all our lives.

But Friday the 24th was the culmination of what had become our one dream and ambition for the last 13 years.

Not the sort of dream most people cherish as their sole ambition, but the only one we were left with to cling to after the dreams we married with – having children, a peaceful family life, long successful careers and growing old together in comfort – were taken away from us by the scandal which is contaminated blood.

Even on the day of our wedding, friends still expressed the opinion Su was 'brave' to marry a haemophiliac [a condition which means the blood does not clot naturally].

She never saw it that way. But then she didn't know, what Steve feared, and what the Department of Health (DoH)and doctors knew. That the treatments on which a haemophiliac depends to lead a normal life were contaminated with life threatening viruses. That a simple everyday medical treatment like wisdom teeth being removed could result in life threatening and destructive infection.

[Steve took a treatment called Factor VIII – a blood product collected from dozens, if not hundreds of donors, which he used to occasionally to temporarily give his blood the ability to clot. However, between the 1970s and early 1990s, those supplies were often sourced from the US from the likes of prisoners and drug users. Not checked, many were contaminated with the likes of HIV or hepatitis C. Almost all haemophiliacs treated over that period are believed to have been infected. Worse still, it has since transpired warnings were voiced to the Department of Health (DoH) but ignored. Thousands were infected. Thousands have since died as a result. Steve Dymond contracted hepatitis C – an illness which attacks the liver and which had a hugely detrimental impact on his life.]

Our revised dream or ambition was simple. That a viable treatment for hepatitis C would become available before the virus totally destroyed Steve's liver or he developed cancer.

That the cure would come before it was too late.

As an ambition it was a reason to get up in the morning. But dreams, well, they don't come true do they? And hope was long gone.

But this time the miracle has happened. In June, the widening of the criteria by NHS England for eligibility for the new treatments so that Steve now qualified, coincided with the confirmation that our year long cancer scare was definitively a false alarm.

Incredibly, we'd won the race. Or at least got within touching distance of the finishing tape in the shape of the first hospital appointment to discuss treatment on July 24.

TIGHT: Couple live with Betty Gorman, Su's 86-year-old mother

Which should have made it the happiest day of our lives.

But it wasn't. Once more the officials at the DoH succeeded in poisoning our lives, if this time not physically.

The revised NHS England guidelines still mean access to the new treatments is still denied for 80 per cent of the victims of contaminated blood which leaves us feeling guilty, about our 'good fortune' and unable to share even less celebrate within our haemophilia community.

The issues around contaminated blood have never been solely about personal health.

There has been the 30-year campaign for justice, a full explanation and a full and decent settlement in compensation.

For 30 years the DoH (which was responsible for the doctors having access to the contaminated blood products with which haemophiliacs were poisoned) have resisted and obstructed any demand for decency.

Until 1991, when Crown immunity was abolished under John Major's administration, no legal redress was possible against agents or institutions of the state (ministers, government departments, civil servants or public bodies).

Some 22 other countries won a court case in the USA against pharmaceutical companies Alpha, Baxter, Bayer and Behring-Aventis in 2010 for contaminating haemophiliacs with HIV and hepatitis C during the 1980s. The payout, under a vicious confidentiality gagging clause, ran to tens of millions of Euros.

UK haemophiliacs contaminated with HIV by NHS Factor VIII were obliged to sign waivers which would preclude them from making any future claims for any other blood-borne viruses they may have contracted from contaminated treatments before they could receive paltry hand-outs.

It has now come to light that when imposing that waiver, UK Government officials knew that NHS Factor VIII stocks were already also contaminated with hepatitis C.

To bring credible legal action, patients require their medical records from that period (1970s and 1980s). It is very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain complete, unredacted records.

At last, political will has reached an unprecedented level of momentum and the prime minister had promised a statement in the House of Commons before July 21 which would herald the end of campaigning.

This translated, at the instigation of DoH officials on July 17, into the poisonous written statement delivered under the back door which summarised as a commitment to do nothing to provide material relief for the victims for a further two years.

Which required, while picking ourselves up from another body blow, immediate action and reaction.

So July 24 became an almost unwelcome intrusion as it took us away from the serious business of campaigning for justice.

Across Kent the Magna Carta is on public view in a series of exhibitions, "Magna Carta Rediscovered"

It would seem timely that as we still campaign for justice, this very celebration of citizen's rights and their protection from the abuses of state power is in full view for all to see.

"To no one will we sell, to no one will deny or delay either right or justice."

So we ask, will there ever be respect for the rights and justice for the victims of the contaminated blood scandal and their families?

■ **Steve Dymond and his wife Su Gorman live in Broadstairs. Both had successful careers before Mr Dymond's illness derailed their lives. Due to the low level of compensation currently provided, they are forced to share the home of Ms Gorman's elderly mother.**

Rain couldn't stop the festivals rocking across the whole county

Last weekend saw downpours but a host of different events couldn't be stopped by the bad weather...

Thousands of people powered through the most gruelling festival conditions last weekend to enjoy some of the biggest events the county has to offer.

First up was Ashford's Create Festival – and 2015 heralded the 20th birthday of this free musical extravaganza.

Headlining the events was 80s pop icon Adam Ant.

Despite the rain, a number of die-hard fans braved the open air main stage, and according to organisers, the three indoor music tents were 'packed'.

The four-day festival included a fountain picnic, Gaz Coombes playing a sell-out show, a Create themed bandstand and Kinbaku – a free multi-media show by some Jasmin Vardimon Company members, as well as a special fire and theatre show around the fountain, produced by Same Sky who were part of the very first Create Festival 20 years ago.

SPIRITED: Huge crowds at Maidstone's Ramblin' Man festival PICTURE BY OLIVER HALFIN

Festival organiser Chris Dixon, said: "It's been an amazing four days hosting world class international acts in different venues, all backed up and supported by local talent, businesses, and volunteers.

"In the space of a few hours we've helped bands play their first ever live gig to an audience, through to making the stage suitable for those who have played the biggest arenas around the world.

"I've now been given the challenge of organising the big one – Create's 21st birthday in 2016."

Rob Forsyth, learner manager of creative arts at Ashford College, said: "Seeing the legend that is Adam Ant on stage with our branding behind him was great, but the real success was knowing that 12 of our students were hands-on behind the scenes helping to make it all happen.

"Some have told me it has been the

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PICTURE BY OLIVER HALFIN

STINGING: The Scorpions rock at Mote Park for the Ramblin' Man Fair (main pic), the procession at Whitstable's Oyster Festival (top) and crowds at Create (bottom right)

best experience of their life".

The Revelation St Mary's Stage hosted a line up of solo artists and acoustic acts across the day. Revelations manager Charlotte Burke said: "To have Mark Morriss headline our very own stage at Create is something we could only have dreamed of a few years ago – we've reached a brand new audience, and we hope to see them at our up and coming shows soon."

Fay Holmes of Canterbury College added: "It was important for us to support the Create DJ Stage again this year, as it is what we do here, and I know that some of our students have had the amazing opportunity to perform alongside some established artists already in the music industry".

Other organisers felt this had been the best Create so far.

Chris and Su Bailey of Right Track

Continues om page 22

Continues from page 21

Music said: "The amount of people we've seen packed in our tent has been amazing."

Always a popular event, Whitstable saw its annual oyster festival hit its shores.

It has grown from a small community celebration into a festival that attracts more than 80,000 visitors from all over the UK and Europe, and the celebrations feature food and drink, music, parades, competitions, and other events.

It is a modern revival of an ancient holy festival dating way back to Norman times.

A spokesman says: "We had two new exciting additions to the festival this year – the Shuck and the Oyster Bed."

The Shuck was a restaurant and live venue which was open for just one week during the Whitstable Oyster Festival.

During the day, it was a restaurant, serving local produce by acclaimed local chefs, accompanied by craft brews, local wines and festival-themed cocktails.

At night, it was an entertainment venue, serving food and hosting music and comedy performers including Craig Charles, Marcus Brigstocke, and The Cuban Bothers among others.

The Oyster Bed was a pop up camp site, offering a place to pitch a tent or pull up a motorhome or caravan.

The inclement weather did prompt fears that camping would be spoiled, but according to organisers, like the rest of the festival, it was a success.

A spokesman said: "The weather is the one thing we don't have any power over but it all went ahead about much of a problem. We had to move some things around. But Saturday was one of the best days we've ever seen. Despite the weather, it was still a good weekend, and a busy weekend. People were in good spirits – they all enjoyed everything. We had some great reactions throughout the day and evening events – they were all a big success. One of our new ventures – The Shuck venue – was very popular, and it was packed out all week-

ICON: Adam Ant performs at Ashford's Create Festival and (right) Seasick Steve greets crowds at the first Ramblin' Man Fair at Maidstone's Mote Park

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PICTURE BY OLIVER HALFIN

end. It couldn't have gone any better."

The inaugural Ramblin' Man Fair – a celebration of classic rock, prog, country and blues – also saw good crowds despite the weather.

The two-day event, which took place in Maidstone's Mote Park, featured music from among others Pendragon, Anathema, The Scorpions, Seasick Steve, Marillion and Camel.

Other acts included Blue Oyster Cult, Saxon, Hayseed Dixie, Shooter Jennings and Jason and the Scorchers.

Sunday's poor weather could not deter stalwart rock fans, with performances on the rock stage from the Rival Sons and a finale by Gregg Allman being well-received.

Event organisers the Rock Collective and Team Rock thanked fans, acts and everyone involved saying: "Thank you so much for a mind blowing weekend. It was truly better than we could of imagined."

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Light shone on darkness of Thatcher Government

Kent author Clive Bloom lifts the lid on one of the country's most controversial politicians, writes **Jamie Weir...**

MARGARET Thatcher's politics are unlikely to be described as bland, or uncontroversial by anyone.

As a politician who presided over the destruction of trade union power, and the coal industry, the Iron Lady has made her way into the history books as one of Britain's Marmite characters; she's both loved and hated in almost equal measure.

Her leadership has always been viewed as one which praised individualism, and tried to shrink the state and centralised Government involvement.

However now, a Kent-based author and Emeritus Professor of English and American studies at Middlesex University, Clive Bloom, has re-examined Mrs Thatcher's Government years.

The book, entitled Thatcher's Secret War: Subversion, Coercion, Secrecy and Government, 1974-90 shines a light on the Government, unveiling what Professor Bloom describes as the 'notorious role of the state against its perceived enemies'.

But why did Professor Bloom choose to examine the history of Mrs Thatcher?

"I'm interested in the bits of history which aren't well known, and aren't well publicised. I've written a number of pieces on parliamentary justice, and injustice, in the past and wanted to explore the Thatcher years in a different way," explains Professor Bloom.

"Mrs Thatcher is one of these characters who has become revered by many, almost turned into a saintly character with films like The Iron Lady, and at the same time vilified by others. Her impact on politics in the UK has been profound and in many ways it still remains with us today."

The 61-year-old Professor doesn't seem the type to rouse a rabble from his seaside home on Kent's north coast in Herne Bay.

However he's certainly not shy when it comes to taking aim at the former Prime Minister, who, according to a BBC poll was voted the sixteenth greatest Briton of all time.

He said: "In a number of cases, people who got in the way of the security forces during the Thatcher era simply vanished.

"There was this paranoia in her Government, with a war being waged against anyone who didn't see eye to eye with Thatcher."

SPOTLIGHT: Professor Bloom has examined the Thatcher years

That conflict sprang from Mrs Thatcher's political ideology, and drive to slim down the state while praising individualism according to Professor Bloom.

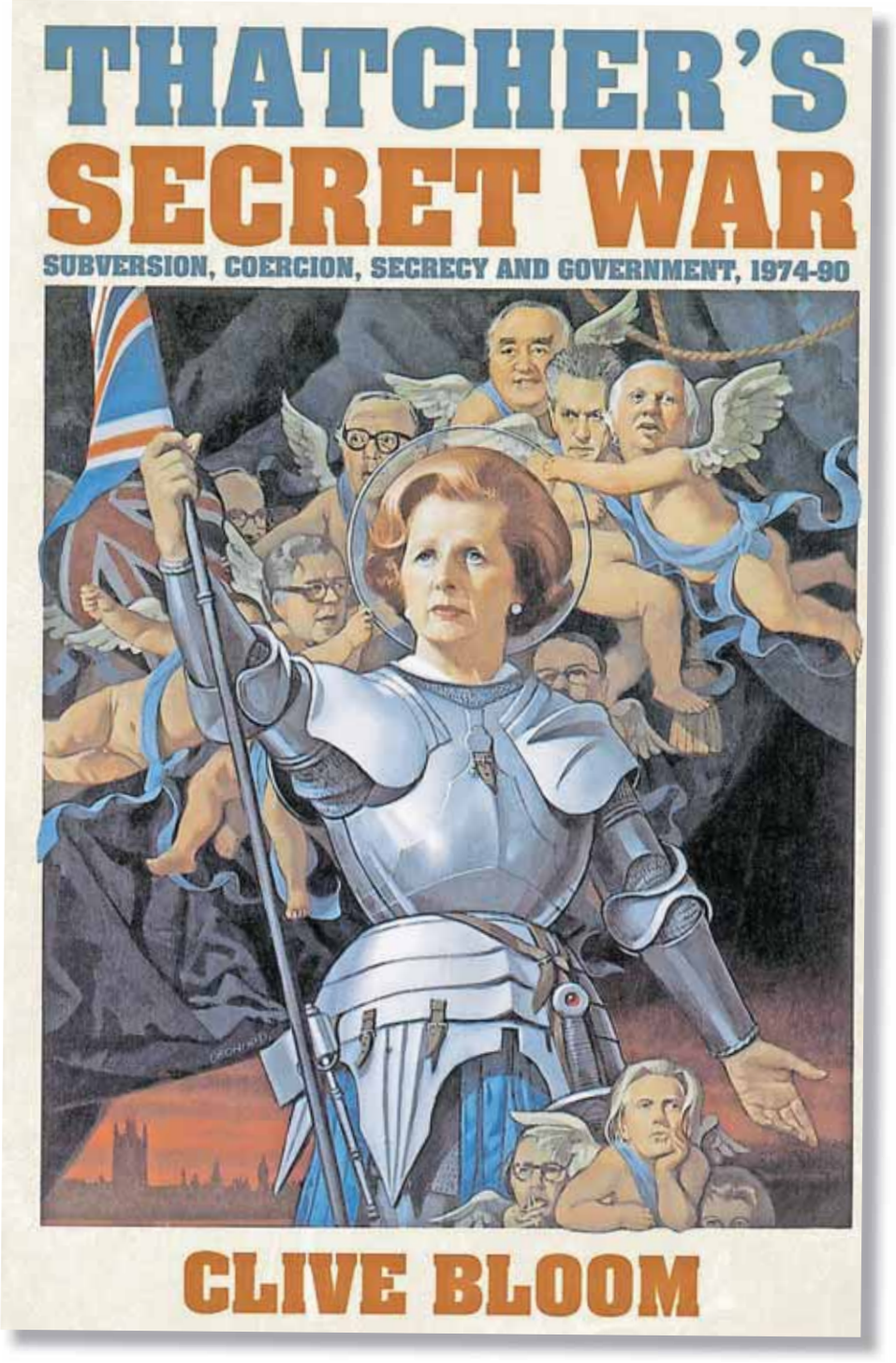
He told KoS: "Thatcher was an unashamed free market capitalist, and someone who believed deeply in the idea of an individual's self determination. She was a moral conviction politician, and someone who did what she believed in. That meant she was willing to carry things through, whatever the cost because she believed she was right.

"Thatcher felt that Communism and the left were the Antichrist, a part of life she abhorred. Really she wanted to roll back the 1960s, and return to a time before the liberalisation of British society, which had taken place during that decade. She wasn't able to do that, but what she could do was destroy state dependency, and the welfare state which she believed was to blame for the ills in the world."

That battle against collectivism, which came from Cold War fears, spurred a darker side to the Thatcher era according to Professor Bloom.

He believes the security services, as well as senior members of the Conservative Party acted in ways they should not have.

He told KoS: "The security services had been working in certain ways in Ireland for some time. They had a shoot to kill policy, and certain techniques which they used to get what they wanted.



SECRECY: According to the author Mrs Thatcher's Government was shrouded in secrecy and embroilled in a war against left-wing politics

"The liberties they took in Ireland, with techniques like torture, state sponsored terrorism and psychological operations, I believe, were imported into Britain.

"I'm not saying that Mrs Thatcher knew all that was going on, but, like the situation with Thomas Becket who was killed at Canterbury Cathedral, people did what they thought she wanted."

It's a tale which Professor Bloom says has increased in relevance in the last 15 years, providing a warning from the past.

He said: "Most people remember the 1980s as a period when they were given greater individual freedoms. The trade off was that these freedoms were bought with greater secrecy from the state, and more things hidden from the public."

The author believes that these issues are growing now as well, with significant parallels between the Thatcher Government, and former Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Professor Bloom said: "Both Thatcher and Blair were moral crusaders, and both had this belief that fundamentally, what they were doing was right. The mysterious deaths of a number of people during the Thatcher years can also be paralleled with that of Dr David Kelly, who had made enemies after claiming that Blair's Government had sexed up the Iraq dossier which ultimately led to war with the country."

Professor Bloom says that Mr Blair's Government shrouded the state in secrecy, something made easier as a result of the 'war on terror'.

He says that now, we're living in an age where security services are continuing to operate under the radar.

He said: "Bulk surveillance, proposed changes to the freedom of information act, and a wide range of instruments, all indicate a time where the security services are acting in a manner which is extremely similar to that of the Thatcher era."

VOTES: A huge majority back the ban

Join the debate and have your say

By Maria Chiorando
maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

A RECORD number of people responded to Kent News' online poll this week.

The question: Should live export be banned?

Overwhelmingly, the public said yes, with 98 per cent saying the trades is outdated.

One per cent of respondents said the trade should not be banned and is legitimate, and the other one per cent said the trade should not be banned, but conditions should be improved.

The poll followed the July 23 shipment of live animals from the Port of Ramsgate - the first in months.

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for south east England, said: "I am opposed to this cruel and needless trade. Many local residents from Kent who witness the lorries travelling to the port have been heavily campaigning on this issue for the last few years.

"Their campaign is backed up by strong scientific evidence which highlights that these journeys cause significant suffering to these animals. I fully support the planned protests by local campaign groups and my constituents today."

But Frank Langrish, a spokesman for the National Farmers' Union and large-scale livestock farmer and transporter, said: "The sheep have a higher value in Europe than here, and a much higher value if they are fattened and slaughtered in those countries, because the quality of these animals is higher.

"The French flock has been reducing over the last few years, so we can supply that market.

"There is also a high demand for halal meat in Europe."

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Buy-a-brick to transform school

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

EVER wanted to have a school building named after you? Well here's your chance and it's yours for a cool £500,000.

And if that perhaps stretches the purse strings a little too much, then you could have a room named after you for £50,000 or, rather more modestly, a special engraved brick for a mere £50.

All are up for grabs at a leading grammar school in Ashford, as it sets out to raise the funds it hopes will provide the bedrock of a major new addition to the school's campus.

Now the Norton Knatchbull in Hythe Road is hoping former students will embrace the idea of being immortalised in the very fabric of the school they once attended.

It wants to build a new creative arts building on the site of its swimming pool, which was closed four years ago, and needs to secure £500,000 to then allow it to bid for the full costs which are estimated to be in excess of £5million.

Explains head teacher Susanne Staab: "The new block will house music, art, DT and computing in addition to providing opportunities for community use.

"It would include a state-of-the-art recording studio and new practice rooms and restructure outside space.

"We hope the funding will be partially provided by the government in recognition of the face we have expanded from a five to six form entry school. The rest, however, we need to raise ourselves."

Currently, many of the students studying music do so in rooms which were originally built in the 1950s and are in desperate need of regeneration.

The school has undergone a number of improvements in recent years but, like all other schools, has faced a major squeeze on its budgets as a result of a reduction in central government funding.

Business manager Paula Bunnell said: "We have seen our budgets cut, year-on-year, by more than 35 per cent. Yet we are expected to do more and more each year. Grammar schools are being hit particularly hard as we receive the lowest proportion of funding.

"Therefore we are given no choice than to seek private sponsorship and raise funds independently for building development."

By raising some 10 per cent of the total sum needed to deliver the new building, it is hoped it will then allow it to bid for other key funding opportunities."

A major part of the fundraising will be an Indian Summer Soiree on September 19 which is open to local businesses and former students.

A similar fundraising ball in the spring raised £15,000 and it is hoped the September event will be equally well attended.

Mrs Bunnell added: "The buy-a-brick is a big focus and we want to inform as many old school students and those associated with the school to invest in our future and become part of our history.

"What better way to become part of our community than to install a permanent memorial of your time and contribution to the school?"

The Indian Summer Soiree is being sponsored by Ashford firm Geerings.

Among the money making schemes are an engraved brick for £50, two for £85, an engraved window for £200, an engraved granite slab for £2,000 and then the big ticket items of having a room in the building named after you for £50,000 or sponsor the building itself for £500,000.

Contact the school for details on the September 19 event.

PLANS: Head Susanne Staab, right, wants to further boost grammar school

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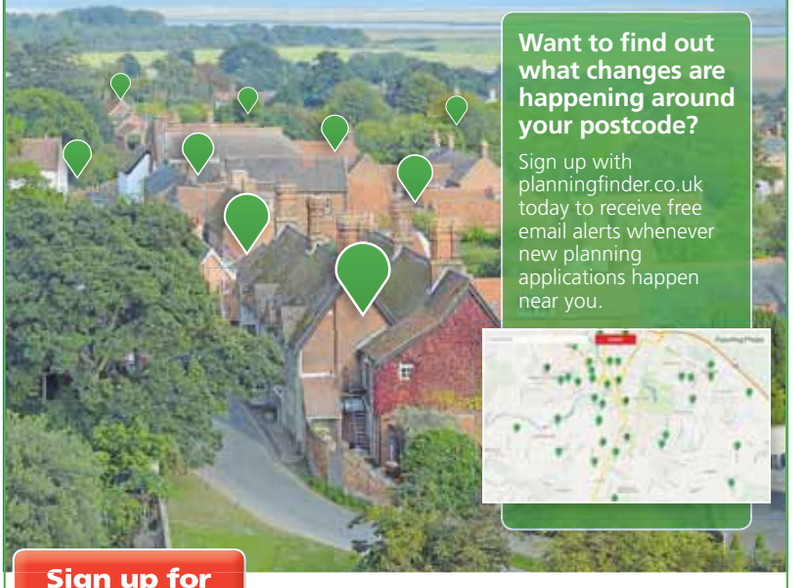

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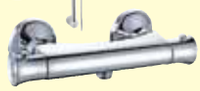

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Regeneration of Ashford takes another giant leap forward

High speed rail services, a new college campus, and a wide range of other developments are helping the town thrive reports **Jamie Weir...**

ALTHOUGH the credit crunch decimated the UK economy when it struck in 2008, its effect is still being felt in high streets and town centres to this day.

Shops lie empty, and town centres across the county have struggled to attract the public.

One place which hasn't seen the slump last though, is Ashford, with building projects pushing forward at pace.

Just a week ago, the rundown buildings on the corner of the town's Elwick Road were demolished, as Ashford College took the first step toward building its new central campus for students of the future.

And this week, the public were asked to give their opinions on a large new development opposite the college site.

The £75 million proposal would transform one of Ashford's longest running grotspots into a vibrant area, with a multiplex cinema, housing and other leisure facilities. Ashford Borough Council's leader, Gerry Clarkson, says both developments are key for the town.

He told KoS: "The area is a prime location in our plans for the town.

"It's on a key corner of Ashford, located just a couple of hundred yards away from Ashford International train station, and obviously it will be directly opposite the new college campus.

"That's the perfect location for leisure facilities like the cinema and retail, as there will be a big group of young people eager to have fun. In fact, eventually we expect that there will be around 1,500 people at the campus, and they'll all have money to spend, and will want to do so.

"We really want to become a destination for young people in Kent, as at the moment Ashford isn't high up on their list of places to go. We want to compete with places like Canterbury to tap into that market."

That, according to Mark Lumsdon Taylor, who, as finance director of the Hadlow Group – which runs Ashford College – is helping spearhead the new college campus' building programme, is something which is achievable.

Mr Lumsdon Taylor said: "At the moment over 500 young people leave Ashford every day to go to study elsewhere in Kent. Isn't that an absolutely ludicrous proposition for the town? The new campus will provide a focal point for business as well, delivering high quality education that meets the needs of businesses in the local community. We'll be asking young people in Ashford; why travel for an hour, spend money on petrol or trains, when you can stay local, support the local economy and support local businesses.

SMASH: Council leader Gerry Clarkson (above left) isn't afraid of getting his hands dirty when it comes to helping with the town's regeneration

"The whole redevelopment of Ashford as a retail centre, and an arts and cultural area will provide young people with a place they want to be. The college is going to work within that, as one of Ashford Borough Council's 'Big Eight' strategic priorities."

Those so-called 'big eight' projects are the council's template to unlocking growth and regenerating the borough.

The eight strategic projects are redevelopment of the town's commercial quarter, Elwick Place area, the college campus, the Stour leisure centre, expansion of the designer outlet shopping centre, development of Chilmington Green, development of a new junction 10a for the M20 and improved signalling for the international railway.

IMPRESSED: Mark Dance of KCC

Mark Dance is Kent County Council's cabinet member for economic development. He told KoS Ashford's big eight strategic priorities were fundamental to the town's growth.

He said: "Because Ashford is well organised with its developments, it is leading the way in Kent. It has its local plan in place, and this has helped it push things forward faster, because it already knows what it wants and where.

"The new development being proposed has some very clever master planning as it has an amazing interplay between different elements of the development.

"On a town level, the new development in Elwick Road will start to move the action closer to the old town, shifting the hub closer to the railway station, which in itself is a key part of Ashford's regeneration and continuing development."

That railway station has recently received a boost as well, and one which will mean it's got the green light for many more years of service.

It was given funding to upgrade its signalling service – another of the big eight – earlier this month. That means it has assured its place in cross-Channel rail services, as the upgrade was necessary to service new trains coming in to service.

Cllr Clarkson said: "The station gives us great connectivity nationally and internationally. Ashford is just 38 minutes from central London on the high speed service, and with the continent easily accessible, we're located in an ideal place for business."

In fact, Cllr Dance says Ashford's connectivity will mean it could also benefit from expansion further afield too.

He told KoS: "Development at Ebbsfleet, and

EDUCATION: What the new college campus in Ashford may look like

MIXED: Proposals for the site opposite the new college include leisure facilities as well as housing. It is hoped they will help to generate constant footfall and bring business to the town

also with Paramount Park will create thousands of new jobs. With Ashford's high speed trains, it opens up jobs in both areas for people who live in the borough and can travel there easily."

Ashford – which according to Cllr Clarkson, 'means business' – has in fact got 500,000 potential employees living within a 40 minute drive of the town.

That workforce is growing too, at the third fastest rate in the south east too – a mighty 14.9 per cent increase in 10 years. It's also attracting outsiders to move to Ashford, with the borough ranked in the top seven per cent most desirable places to live in the UK.

And jobs are something Ashford has also managed to help create, with Cllr Clarkson telling KoS unemployment was as low as it was ever likely to be in the borough – just over one per cent.

He said: "Between 2001 and 2011 we created 7,600 new jobs. We've attracted big businesses to the area, and that's helping to keep pushing regeneration forward.

"We're also putting our money where our mouth is with developments like Ashford College's new campus, pumping millions of pounds of our cash in to help it move forward. We're showing the council's confident the area is going to grow successfully.

"We've invested in a variety of new things, one of which is the Park Mall Shopping Centre with its 34 shops. We're transforming the offering throughout the centre, ensuring jobs are created in the future. The new college campus will also help with this. We identified a skills shortage in the area, which meant that we were needing to import workers for certain jobs.

"Obviously the new campus will help bridge that skills gap, offering the right training which we need to keep thriving."

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March of time in Sittingbourne captured forever by new book

Collection will feature modern and archive pictures of the town side by side, writes **Molly Kersey**...

A NEW book featuring a collection of old and new photographs is aiming to bring the history of Sittingbourne to life.

Sittingbourne Through Time features more than 180 photographs of the town – showcasing modern and archive photographs side by side to provide an insight into the area and how it has changed over the years.

The book was created by Robert Turcan, a retired stockbroker who lives in the town.

It is the latest in Amberley Publishing's revised editions of their successful Through Time series.

Mr Turcan first became involved with the series through his interest in collecting topographical postcards.

"I am a member of the Sittingbourne post card group," he told KoS.

"They were approached by Amberley Publishing. I took up the challenge to create Sittingbourne Through Time. That was six years ago and it was the first book that I did.

"I have done 13 since then and the 13th is the revised version of Sittingbourne Through Time. They used some of the old and some of the new. I found so much more material.

"They are very simple books – a collection of pictures with captions. Quite a few of the pictures were ones that I had collected over the years because I have a natural interest. Others I found from Ebay, postcard fairs and other collectors.

"I bought a camera, quite a good one, and although I have got no formal training I put it on automatic, found some good light and went out and took some modern pictures.

"It takes about six weeks from start to finish. First I get the older pictures, then I take the new pictures and then I do the writing afterwards."

Situated on the road between London and Dover, Sittingbourne became a frequent stopover for travellers and their horses.

And the town has seen a number of transformations – such as the arrival of a railway in 1860 and old derelict brickfields becoming new commercial estates.

"One of the biggest changes is the paper mill, which has been demolished," explained Mr Turcan.

"It had been a paper mill for hundreds of years. That's now a supermarket."

As well as the changing landscape of the area, Mr Turcan is also interested in the personal histories of those who have lived in the town.

The book features photographs of people such as members of the Sittingbourne Football Club, who moved to their new home in Murston back in 1990 after the Bull Ground was sold off for shop redevelopment.

They later moved to a smaller ground within the same complex.

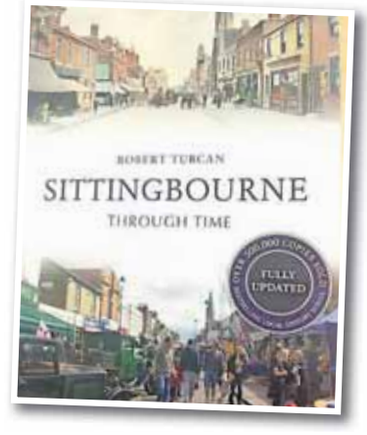
"If you can find stories about people it brings it alive," he said.

ARCHIVE: The Odeon Cinema was the last of three picture houses to close its doors.

MODERN: The cinema has now reopened in Sittingbourne town.

ARCHIVE: The Old Westminster Bank used to operate from the building in the centre of the picture.

MODERN: The way the buildings look today.



WRITER: Robert Turcan was pleased to take on the challenge of compiling the book.

"It's not all about buildings, it's about people's lives.

"For the first book about Sittingbourne I did try and work out a theme where I covered things like the fire brigade, the police and a football team, and tried to make it as diverse as possible and bring organisations into it. The first book had things about the Army Cadets and Sea Cadets, the ongoing groups that make a community cohesive."

Mr Turcan has compiled books about other areas in Kent for the series including Faversham and Ashford.

"Faversham is a terrific town. For me it had a particular fascination," he told KoS.

"That was the cradle of the gunpowder industry, so there is a lot of historical content there.

"It was once the capital of England when King Stephen lived there and there was a huge monastery. It was demolished during the reformation."

He said a growing interest in the past helped make the books a success.

"I think particularly among schools there has been interest, they are making children more aware of history and I am hoping that a lot of the books will be bought by parents for their children.

"It's for children really and the older generation who have witnessed changes. I think there is a lot more interest in the past now and an interest in heritage has grown.

"I can remember years ago thinking 'why don't people put history on television?' but commercially it's big business now.

"There is a lot of nostalgia around old pictures and the past."

■ **Sittingbourne Through Time is £14.99 and available to buy now. For more details visit www.amberley-books.com.**

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Raw, funny and honest photos on the street

A battle with mental illness led a city high flyer in a new artistic direction in north Kent writes Maria Chiorando...

A FIGHT with depression, OCD, and alcohol led a former city worker to a new path in street photography.

Photographer Lee Fennings was born in Chatham in 1971, and has lived in Gravesend for most of his life – the town often features in his work.

"Street photography is raw, very diverse and honest" he explains. "You capture a fleeting moment in time – nothing is set up or staged, and that's precisely how I like it, particularly if the photograph has a touch of irony and humour to it."

Mr Fennings says he finds 'solitude' in his photography – helpful in dealing with his mental health issues.

He says: "I have suffered with depression and OCD for many years. It's a very personal subject, but I want to put it out there because it's not always openly talked about, and there are people out there who are suffering in silence.

"I would strongly urge anyone struggling to speak about it, either to their doctor, a member of the family, a friend or even a local organisation. I'm lucky to have strong support around me but personally found the local services of charities CRI and Mind invaluable.

"I would never tell someone that I know how they are feeling – you don't know how anyone else is feeling because everyone is different.

"I used to work in the city for a high profile investment bank. I was a contractor, working in financial regulation at vice president level in an intense environment.

"I was self-medicating with alcohol, to relieve the pressure of my illnesses.

"Together with type 1 diabetes and coeliac disease (with a recent diagnosis of osteoporosis), I got to a point last year where my contract was not renewed, ultimately because of my health issues.

"Having always had an interest in photography, I started taking it more seriously because I needed something positive to concentrate on.

"In terms of what inspires me, travel is one thing, but it's mainly about people and the human condition. Street photography is all about being aware of what's around you with that degree of anticipation and forward thinking, as well as being very alert to those unexpected and impromptu moments that require quick framing and shooting.

"I like to use both digital and 35mm formats, shooting mostly in black and white."

STYLISH: (From top) Ladies eat ice cream in Gravesend, stairwell in London, dog in Gravesend, Boy jumps ,Gravesend promenade wall, chess game in London and shadowplay in London, all 2015

He is hopeful about the future.

He says: "I've experienced the destructive nature of alcohol at first hand and have made some stupid mistakes.

"I have been without it now for nearly ten months and have a completely different outlook on life. Depression and OCD is not something that can be simply shrugged off, but believe I'm heading in the right direction with my photography helping me along the way.

"I believe in myself, and I believe in my work."

■ **Lee Fennings' work can be seen at www.leefenningsphotography.co.uk.**

You can also follow him on Twitter using the handle @ lpfstreet.

PLANS: Artist's impressions of how the site of the former Ministry of Defence complex could be transformed into hundreds of homes, commercial properties and even a hotel

Is future of top secret base set to finally be decided next month?

After announcing it was to shut in 2011, **Chris Murphy** takes a look at the latest plans for Fort Halstead

THE future of what was once one of Britain's most secretive military bases could be decided next month.

Fort Halstead, on the outskirts of Sevenoaks, was shrouded in mystery for decades as one of the key forensic sites.

Since it was built in 1892 as one of a string of fortresses designed to protect London in the event of any invasion (see box off) it became a leading research site, investing everything over the years from rocket technology to probing the remains of the double decker bus blown up as part of the July 7 terrorist attacks in London in 2005.

But after changing hands it was confirmed in 2011 it was to close with the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory being moved to Porton Down in Wiltshire in 2017.

The future of the hundreds of staff there is also still being considered. As one of the major employers in the borough, its departure has been seen as a major blow.

At one point, there were 800 people on site, but the majority have been either let go or absorbed in other areas.

Now with the site being sold, the future of what will happen to it could be resolved sooner rather than later.

Two public consultations have been held to assess local opinion on what should happen to the buildings left behind and the local council says it expects to examine the plans at a meeting scheduled for next month.

Developer Armstrong (Kent) LLP is heading its regeneration plans.

It confirmed the site's largest tenant, the Ministry of Defence's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (known as Dstl) is due to relocate its operations from Fort Halstead to Porton Down and Portsdown West by late 2017, which will leave a large proportion of the site vacant.

The company said it was crucial the future of Fort Halstead is sustainable, dynamic and viable to ensure a high quality environment can be created on the site when Dstl leaves.

A spokesman for Sevenoaks District Council said: "We are currently considering a major planning application on the site.

"It is for outline planning permission for the demolition of buildings and development of a mixed-use development comprising a business area of up to 27,000 square metres, plus 450 residential units, a hotel of up to 80 beds, a village centre and use of the fort area and bunkers as an historic interpretation centre.

"There would also be formal and informal open spaces, transport and utilities infrastructure, plus cycle and car parking areas.

"There is also detailed approval for two access points at Otford Lane and Crow Drive, which is the primary route and a secondary one at Star Hill."

The authority added: "At the moment, the proposal is pencilled in to go to our development control committee in September. Fort Halstead is already allocated in our planning policies as a site that could accommodate up to 450 new homes."

A Dstl spokesman added: "We are aiming to relocate from Fort Halstead by the end of 2017. There are significant challenges in relocating the unique and complex facilities, due to the nature of our work, and this has resulted in a delay in the design phase which will delay the construction design phase.

"Dstl is committed to relocating its operations from Fort Halstead to Porton Down and Portsdown West in order to deliver more effectively and efficiently to its customers. Around 840 staff have been affected by the move; around 200 moved by spring 2014."

Of the houses planned, it is expected around 20 per cent will be classed as 'affordable'.

Stephen Roberts is the spokesman for Armstrong, He said they are still working through comments made at the public meetings so they can possibly tweak the main planning application.

Once it has been completely rebuilt, and all the businesses move in, Armstrong claims local spending in the area could top £1.2 million annually from 540 working people and the almost 100 building jobs a year it will create during construction.

■ **What do you think of the proposals? Share your views and join the debate.**

Email your comments to: editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

HALSTEAD – A SECRET HISTORY...

TRYING to chart the full history of Fort Halstead is no simple task - primarily due to the fact that throughout its existence it has been shrouded in secrecy.

But this much we do know.

Built in 1892, it was one of a ring of defences which surrounded London – ready for a team of volunteers to spring into action in the event of a crisis.

Seen from the sky, you can still just about make out the shape of the original fortress on the site.

But over the years, it changed shape and form to become something of a sprawling labyrinth

In 1922, the secrets started with work there over the next 20 years being key to major breakthroughs.

The British effort in the atomic bomb race was partly conducted there for a while under the name 'high explosive research'.

The results were detonated in the Montebello Islands off Australia's north west coast, a favourite spot for a while to test atom bombs.

The results of terrorists' work became a focus, and the scientists there provided some detailed information on not only the 7/7 attack in London, but also the Lockerbie atrocity.

A car bomb was spotted smouldering in 2007 in London.

Researchers from Halstead were called upon to check the gas cylinders and nails once the device was made safe.

On the more unusual side of the fort's history are the apparent visits of Ruth Ellis, the last woman in Britain to be hanged to the area.

She was hanged in 1955 at Holloway for murdering lover David Blakely, 26.

It is said she mixed with some sensitive members of the Halstead staff, including the spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean.

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How Pluto helped fuel war effort with pipeline under the Channel

Chris Murphy on the remarkable feat of engineering which helped keep troops moving during the war

YEARS before the Second World War finally ended in 1945, British strategists were already planning how to sustain its forces fighting on mainland Europe.

Good supply lines are the lifeblood of any military force – without them, men would soon be stranded and vulnerable.

Along with ammunition and food, fuel was the most needed. Once the Allied forces landed in France, in order to keep tanks rolling and trucks moving, they needed the fuel necessary to power the vehicles fighting the swarm of Nazi forces.

It was seen as vital to have it in place by 1944 to quite literally fuel Operation Overlord – the Allied invasion of Normandy.

So an innovative plan was devised for Operation Pluto – Pipe-Lines Under The Ocean.

In Kent, it followed the route of the Dymchurch light railway before crossing the Channel sea bed.

In 1942, the first test pipelines were being laid under the surface of the River Medway to see if it could work.

A common technology today, in wartime Kent, scientists and engineers were pushing the boundaries of what was possible.

Early versions of the pipe used considerable amounts of lead to make it flexible while retaining strength.

It soon became obvious there was not enough lead in Britain, including all the church roofs, to produce the quantities needed.

RAILWAY: The Pluto pipeline followed the route of the Romney, Hyth and Dymchurch Railway - pictured below today - to help fuel British tanks and vehicles

The entire project was the brainchild of Arthur Hartley, the chief engineer with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, and the organisation which would ultimately morph into what we know today as BP.

Wartime minister for petroleum, Geoffrey William Lloyd and Admiral Mountbatten, chief of combined operations, decided to push ahead with Hartley's idea of using adapted submarine telephone cable.

The second and more favoured material was developed by the Iraq Petroleum Company and the Burmah Oil Company.

Eventually, the pipe itself was the steel with the ends in the lead, which cut costs and material needs drastically.

A prototype was tested in May 1942 using the Medway instead of the Channel, and deep water tests went across the Firth of Clyde a month later.

Happy with the successful tests, production was started by Siemens Brothers at Woolwich, Henley's at North Woolwich, Callendar's at Erith and Standard Telephones and Cables at Greenwich.

More successful tests in the Clyde saw the tactically adventurous idea adopted into a future invasion plan with full construction launched in August.

Existing cable laying ships were too small so merchant ships were converted to cope with the steel two inch diameter pipe.

> **"I am convinced this helped bring the war to an earlier end. Without it, the Allies crossing France to Germany would have taken so much longer."**
>
> **Peter Bamford,** Kent historian

In October 1942, HMS Holdfast took on board 30 miles of pipe to test lay in rough weather across the Bristol Channel. This time the ends were connected in both Swansea and Ilfracombe. It was used for real, helpful for both supplying these areas, plus vital training for the operators come the invasion.

The first line to France was laid on August 12, 1944, measuring an astonishing 70 nautical miles from Shanklin Chine on the Isle of Wight across the English Channel directly south to Cherbourg.

It was so successful, an incredible 17 more lines were laid, from Dungeness to Ambleteuse near Calais.

Pumping stations were disguised in buildings like cottages and garages.

Pluto Cottage at Dungeness, is still there with its working life continuing as a bed and breakfast.

The line across Romney to Dungeness was given the code name Dumbo.

The topography of the marsh land meant some of the pipe was visible, so was encased in concrete shielding. Some of this is still visible today.

Peter Bamford, secretary at the Folkestone and District Local History Society, told us: "This pipeline was vital to the war effort.

"Without it, fleets of tanker ships would have had to constantly make trips across the Channel making them vulnerable to attack by submarine or from the air.

"Also, whatever tankers were available at the time were crisscrossing the Atlantic to keep the reserves on the Britain mainland topped up.

"The answer seems so simple these days with long oil lines crossing entire countries and seas.

"But back then, they even had to decide on and develop the materials to be used. Because it had not been done on this scale before, they were learning on the job, so to speak.

"And they had to get it done fast. There was a war to be won so delays were not an option.

"It is amazing they were planning it so early in the war. After all, this is just two years after the ill-fated Dunkirk assault, which saw flotillas of little ships battling to bring troops safely home.

"Determined not to be put off, the British government along with the best minds in engineering and the military overcame all the odds.

"I am convinced this oil line helped bring the war to an earlier end.

"If the Allies had been forced to constantly stop and wait for more fuel, crossing France in to Germany would have taken so much longer.

"Keeping an Army moving is done through the men's stomachs, but keeping their vehicles moving was achieved through this incredibly pipeline. These amazing pipelines were the forerunners of all flexible pipes used in the development of offshore oil fields today."

The network grew and grew to reach about 1,000 miles, across Britain and deep into Europe as far as the Rhine.

And it was well used – at its busiest, some one million gallons were moved per day.

It is estimated 172 million gallons had been pumped by VE-Day.

Even when the war was over, the pipelines were still useful for a while, but around 90 per cent was eventually salvaged between 1946/9. The scrap sold for more than the cost of recovery.

The Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway museum also tells the tale of the pipeline and even has a replica of the only miniature train to be armed, built at the time to help protect the pipes.

STAR: Jessie Wallace will take to the stage alongside Shane Richie for the first time ever

EastEnders stars prepare to commit a perfect murder

The duo will perform on stage together for the first time writes **Molly Kersey**

EASTENDERS stars Jessie Wallace and Shane Richie will be appearing together on stage for the first time in next year's production of The Perfect Murder.

The show is based on the novel by best-selling crime author Peter James. It is directed by Olivier-award winner Ian Talbot and adapted by award-winning writer Shaun McKenna.

The dark comedy thriller tells the story of Victor Smiley and his wife Joan, who have been married for a long time and reached a crisis point in their relationship.

Victor has decided that there is only one way to get his wife out of his life forever, but he is in for a nasty surprise.

Young Detective Roy Grace starts to investigate his very first murder case, but when dark forces intervene he begins to fear that nothing is quite as it seems.

Peter James has had numerous best-sellers around the world, selling more than 16 million books of his Roy Grace series, and has been published in 36 languages.

He said: "It has always been my dream that one day the curtains would rise in a theatre and a play of my work would be performed.

"That dream came true in 2014 after a chance meeting with my old friend, producer Joshua Andrews.

"The first run of The Perfect Murder was a sell out success and we have followed that this year with an even more successful run of my best-selling book Dead Simple."

He added: "To now have Shane Richie and Jessie Wallace star in The Perfect Murder really is another dream come true.

"Shane has been a fan of my books for a while, as I have been of Shane.

"They have been loved on television by huge audiences over a number of years, which just goes to show how great they are together and I can't wait to see Shane and Jessie planning to murder each other on stage every night."

Mr Richie and Ms Wallace are well known for playing couple Kat and Alfie Moon on the BBC One soap - and their highs and lows have kept audiences gripped for the last 13 years.

They are both looking forward to making the transition from TV to the stage.

Mr Richie said: "It's an honour to be attached to Peter James' work as I'm such a fan of his books."

Ms Wallace added: "As soon as I read the script, I knew I had to do it.

"Watch out because sparks are going to fly and it's the perfect murder."

Producer Joshua Andrews said: "I am thrilled that Shane and Jessie have chosen The Perfect Murder as the production in which to star on stage together for the very first time, as they really are 'perfect' casting for Victor and Joan.

"Peter and I are very much looking forward to working with them on this short tour and hopefully we might see a limited London run at the end of that."

The Perfect Murder will be at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, from February 8 to 13 2016.

For more information, or to book tickets, you can visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.

Alternatively call the box office on 0844 871 7620.

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Amateur actors will be starring in a classic Shakespeare play

by Molly Kersey
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

THE well-loved Shakespeare play A Midsummer Night's Dream will be coming to the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury next year.

And what's more – amateur actors from the county will be playing the roles of the Mechanicals when the production arrives.

The Royal Shakespeare Company's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Play For the Nation, will be performed on stage from April 19 to 23.

Members of the Canterbury Players will be taking on the roles of the well-loved characters the Mechanicals – including the iconic role of Bottom the weaver.

The Mechanicals are an under-prepared yet loveable bunch of craftsmen and women who put themselves forward to entertain royalty at the end of the play.

In Canterbury the roles will be played by Sarah Gooch, Hannah Lloyd, Sid Moon, Jim Newberry, Lisa Nightingale – who will play Bottom the weaver – and Adam Summers.

ACTORS: The Canterbury Players will perform alongside professionals. Credit: Topher McGrilli.

The group will be performing alongside a cast of 18 professional actors and a creative team led by deputy artistic director Erica Whyman.

Initially they will rehearse with their own amateur director Sally Elkerton, also of the Canterbury Players, before rehearsing with the Royal Shakespeare Company from January, 2016.

Ms Whyman said: "Canterbury Players are a life-force, owning the stage and performing with a delightful confidence.

"Lisa is one of only two women playing Bottom around the UK. She impressed us with her glorious comic energy. Each member of the company brought something memorable to their audition, and we know we will have a lot of fun rehearsing with them."

Ms Elkerton added: "We are looking forward to learning from professionals and to sharing our new skills with the rest of the Canterbury Players."

Tickets to the performance are available to buy now and are priced from £14.50 to £33.50.

For more information, or to book, call the box office on 01227 787787.

Alternatively, you can visit www.marlowetheatre.com.

Free music for art visitors

THE 21-strong string section of Kent Youth Orchestra will perform a free concert for visitors to the Turner Contemporary, Margate, on August 15 from 3pm. Conductor Julian Milone will lead the ensemble.

Katherine Ryan on stage

COMEDIAN Katherine Ryan will be performing at the Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks, on October 1 at 8pm.

Ms Ryan has appeared on shows including Mock The Week, 8 Out of 10 Cats and QI.

For more details or to book, visit www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk.

Goal run and family fun

A GOAL running event and family fun day will be taking place at the Woodchurch Village Life Museum on August 22 at midday.

For details, visit www.woodchurchmuseum.com.

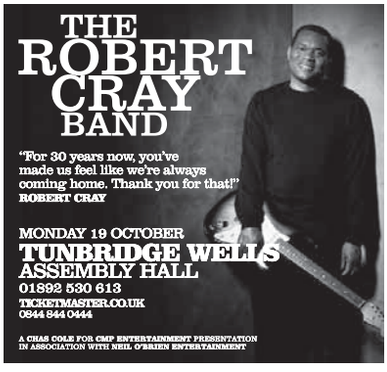
Jasper Carrott returns

JASPER Carrott will be bringing his new show Stand Up and Rock! to the Central Theatre, Chatham, on September 12.

The performance will be starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets for the show are £25.

For more information or to book tickets, you can visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.



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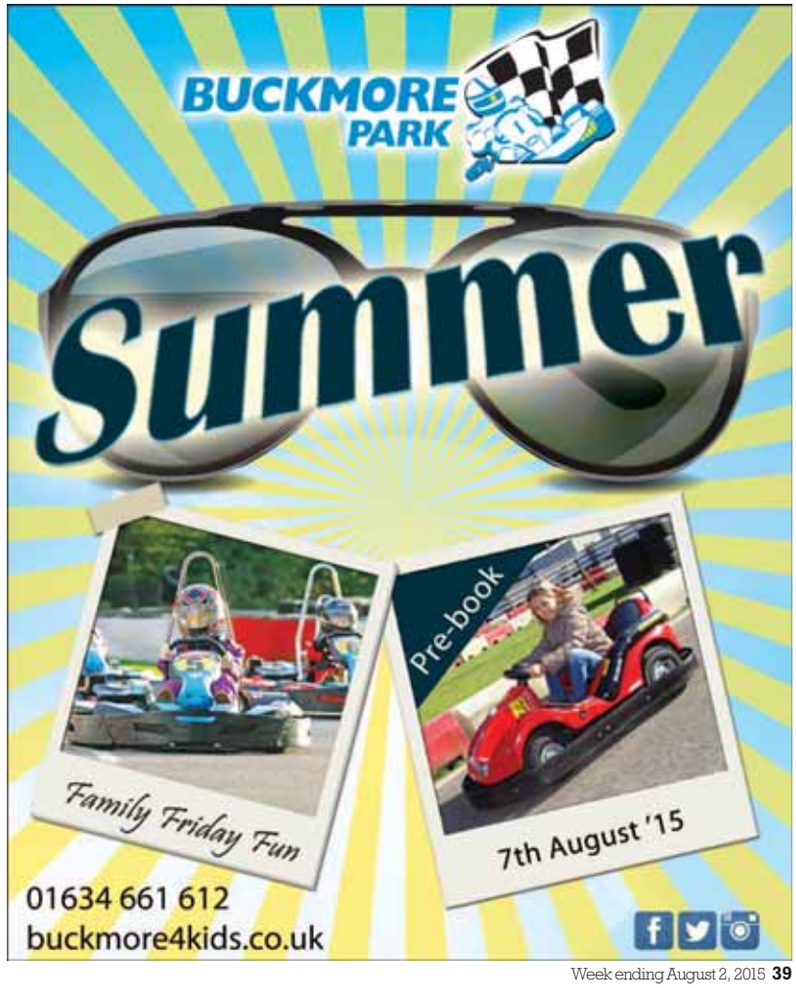

Irish dancing and harmonies in a 'spectacular' new stage show

by Molly Kersey
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

INTERNATIONAL hit show Spirit of the Dance will be making its way to Dartford next month.

The popular show features a range of different dance styles, including Irish dance, tango, flamenco and salsa.

The successful show has now been seen by some 20 million people around the world since it was first created.

It is produced by David King – who is the creator of productions including Man in the Mirror, Rock Around The Clock, and New Jersey Lights – for Spirit Productions.

Spirit of the Dance has won nine global awards, including best choreography and best international production.

It will be performed at the Orchard Theatre.

Speaking about the show and what it has in store for audiences, a spokeswoman from the theatre explained: "Spirit of the Dance features a spectacular blend of traditional culture that has thrilled audiences all over the world.

HIT: Irish dancing will be featured in the popular show.

"The world champion dancers of the Irish International Dance Company sound like a runway express train and their frenzied skill and military precision sends shivers down your spine.

"Not one Irish dance shoe steps out of line as the thunderous feet perform as one."

The show showcases colourful costumes, dynamic lighting and lively choreography.

As well as this, it will also be featuring some special guests - Dublin's Irish Tenors.

The singers will perform a selection of music including classic Irish songs, opera, pop and swing.

The Orchard Theatre spokeswoman added: "Dublin's Irish Tenors combine the finest singers in the world, with the result being simply breath-taking.

"With wonderful harmonies and radiant smiles, Dartford crowds will go wild for Dublin's Irish tenors."

Spirit of the Dance will be performed at the Orchard Theatre from August 17 to 22.

For more information about the show or to book tickets for the performance, you can the theatre's website at visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Alternatively you can contact the ticket office on 01322 220000.

Country duo due in town

POPULAR country duo The Shires will be performing at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on October 7.

Tickets cost £16.25.

To book, call the box office on 0844 871 3015.

Relive hits of Johnny Cash

THE Johnny Cash Roadshow will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on August 29.

The show will relive the hits of the musical legend and it is fronted by singer Clive John.

For more information, or to book, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Birds of prey on display

FALCONRY displays will be taking place on the South Lawn at Penshurst Place on Sundays from 11am to 4pm until August 30. The summer sessions will allow families to discover more about the birds of prey.

Exploring Carroll's world

ONE man show Crocodiles in Cream, will be performed at an outdoor theatre event at Smallhythe Place on August 20 at 7.30pm.

David Horlock's show delves into the fascinating world of writer Lewis Carroll.

Tickets are £12 and booking is essential on 0844 249 1895.

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Food writer Coleman on cherry-picked recipes

Since being crowned the winner of BBC show MasterChef Natalie Coleman has released a new book

A COUPLE of years ago, Natalie Coleman was just as likely to be spinning the decks in a nightclub as flitting between saucepans in the kitchen.

All that changed in 2013, when the former credit controller and part-time techno DJ won MasterChef and hung up her headphones to pursue her passion for cooking.

"The DJ-ing days are long gone. It's only friends' parties these days. Which is a shame, because I loved playing my music, but you can't do it all," said the 31-year-old. "I packed up my office job, and now everything I do revolves around food."

Since being crowned winner of the BBC One show, Coleman has brought out her own book, Winning Recipes For Every Day, completed work placements in the kitchens of top chefs such as Marcus Wareing and Michel Roux Jr, and appeared at numerous food festivals and roadshows.

But while Coleman – who jokingly describes herself as "the girl from Hackney done good" – confesses her kitchen is "too tiny to swing a cat in", she won't be moving away from her east-London base any time soon.

"I like it too much here. There's so much going on, loads of places to eat, you've got Brick Lane, Broadway Market, Vietnamese food – everything's on your doorstep," she said.

Coleman's latest project is a series of sweet and savoury recipes for British Cherries to mark this summer's cherry season. The flavoursome dishes include Cherry tart tatin; Cherry mess; Pork, cherry and pistachio terrine; and Spiced duck pancakes with cherry sauce.

SUCCESS: Natalie Coleman has pursued her passion for cooking.

"You can do so many different things with cherries," says Coleman.

"They go really nicely with savoury dishes. With the pork recipe, you need something that's a bit sharp to cut through the fatty meat, so they work really well with it."

Using fresh, seasonal produce in her dishes is important to the chef. But what she's most enthusiastic about is inspiring youngsters to get involved in the kitchen.

She's teamed up with Central Street Cooking School to host affordable cookery lessons for children.

"They're such a laugh and the kids are so responsive, they love it," says Coleman, who finds the classes are a way of encouraging picky eaters to try dreaded fruit and veg.

"We turn fruit and vegetables into something cool. Tomorrow we're doing little chicken shish kebabs and flatbreads and a 'slaw, they don't realise how many vegetables they're getting, and we're doing muffins with cherries in them," she adds.

The busy cook and food writer still finds time to tune into MasterChef, which she returned to last year as a guest judge.

"Last season was great. When I went back, I did feel for them," she said. "I was in their shoes once, and I know what it's like."

Cinderella is on stage

CINDERELLA – the pantomime – will be making a week long performance in Deal next week.

All the usual characters, including Buttons, Prince Charming and the Baron, will tread the boards between August 5 and 8.

The show is suitable for people of all ages.

For more information, or to buy tickets, for the performance you can visit www.theastor.org.

Technicolour coat tale

CENTRE Stage Academy will be presenting their second annual youth project – Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat – in association with the Woodville Theatre, Gravesend.

The musical includes songs such as Any Dream Will Do and Close Every Door.

It will take place on August 14 and 15 at 7.30pm and tickets range from £11 to £16.

To book, visit www.woodville.co.uk.

Peculiar music in show

FAMILY show Kid Carpet & The Noisy Neighbours will be performed at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on September 20.

The show features Kid Carpet – who uses Casio keyboards, cardboard, sticky tape and shouting to make some peculiar music.

The show will be performed at 2.30pm.

For more information, or to book, call the box office on 01303 760750 or alternatively you can visit www.quarterhouse.co.uk.

TV comic in Maidstone

STAR of BBC2's Mock The Week and Channel 4's 8 Out of 10 Cats Rob Beckett will be bringing his new show to the Hazlitt Theatre Maidstone next month.

Rob Beckett – Mouth of the South, will be performed on September 9 at 8pm.

The show is suitable for those aged 15 and over and tickets are £14.

For details, visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk.

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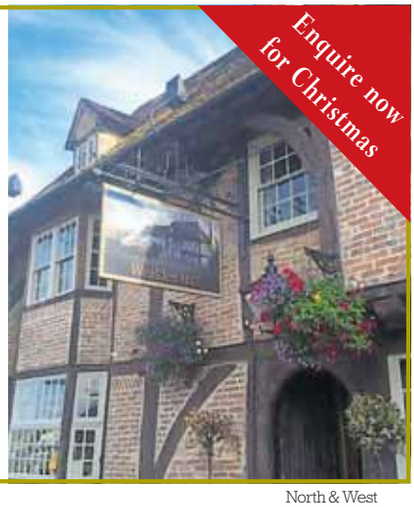

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Sleep like a baby in idyllic Austria

TRAVEL REVIEW: Austria

byFiona Wootton

ACCORDING to Austrian folklore, the soul of Emperor Charlemagne lays resting beneath the Tyrolean Wilder Kaiser mountain range.

The legend states that when the Hohen Grutten stream ceases to run, the mighty power will awaken to fight a great battle and vanquish his enemies.

With warm sunbeams on my shoulders, a glass of Prosecco in one hand and a wriggly eight-month-old baby in the other, I attempt to trace the outline of the Kaiserkopf – Emperor's head – etched into the majestic Austrian Alps ahead of me.

I notice that the mountain stream is still in full flow, and with not even a hint of conflict in the air, it's safe to say Emperor Charlemagne is still sound asleep.

Thousands of fir trees carpet the mountainsides, where butterflies dart between wild flowers and the climate flits between cool mountain breeze to comfortable warmth, easing muscles tired from baby lifting and carrying.

Run by husband and wife duo Gunter and Bianca Lampert, the Kaiserhof wellness hotel is a picturesque hideaway that appears to tick along at a similarly gentle pace.

With an indoor pool, natural spring, spa and five restaurants, it's already charmed me.

Since having a baby, the pleasures of peace and pampering have become distant memories from a former life.

But for a few days, I'm hoping to reclaim some pre-parenthood rest and relaxation.

With Daddy on babysitting duty and my daughter only a press of a hotel-room-to-wellness-spa-intercom away, I seize some mummy time.

RELAXATION: The hotel has an indoor pool, natural spring, spa and restaurants.

I start my days with poolside yoga stretches and water exercise classes and even manage to sneak off for a few hours to relax on an a sun lounger with a good book, while gazing out to the snow-capped mountains.

Although my baby, Maya, is too small for the hotel's kids club, there are plenty of options and accommodations for little ones.

My daughter is particularly noisy, with a habit of letting out insistent pterodactyl shriek during mealtimes, which makes eating out fairly unappealing.

But, at our request, the hotel easily seat us at a safe distance from the other diners.

One evening, we even have a meal delivered to our room and set it up on our private balcony.

Kaiserhof's food is impeccable, so you don't want to risk missing out on meals.

Buffet breakfasts are extensive with multiple courses and glasses of fizz, and in the afternoon, a swell of cakes and pastries also appears.

Dinner is a fittingly regal six-course affair, although at times it's a little too overwhelming for a tired child who can only stay put in a high chair for 25 minutes.

But even though our meals are rushed, our daughter does calm down in the bar, where live music seems to quell her temper.

During the day, there's a cosy playroom where activities take place, and an outside playground area with trampoline and swings.

But it's the setting that really makes Kaiserhof a winner for children.

Austrians are a wholesome outdoorsy sort and have made great efforts to set up family friendly attractions in the area.

Soaring cable cars and monorail mountain trains link the valley below with mountaintop playgrounds, while adventure comes in the form of zip lines, kooky-spooky walks and water explosions.

Buggies can easily be taken on the cable cars, and some walks are even on terrain suited to pushchairs.

Top three child-friendly attractions in the area are water wonderland Hexenwasser, Hochsoll, quaint magnolia draped village KaiserBad & Ellmis Zauberwelt, Ellmau and KaiserWelt, Scheffau.

With so many concessions for families, our holiday runs smoothly without any tantrums, tears or arguments between Mum and Dad.

In the shadow of a sleeping emperor, peace and calm reigns supreme.

TRAVEL FACTS

Fiona Wootton was a guest of Wilder Kaiser tourist board. Visit www.wilderkaiser.info/en. A family apartment at Kaiserhof wellness hotel costs from 160 euros per person, half-board. Visit www.kaiserhof-ellmau.at/en

The nearest airports are: Salzburg 70km, Innsbruck 90km, Munich 150km, all offering low-cost flights from London.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
(12A, 131 mins) Action/Thriller/Romance/Comedy

CALL it testosterone-fuelled recklessness, hubris or feeling the need... the need for speed, Tom Cruise certainly puts on a show in the fifth instalment of the Mission: Impossible franchise.

He clings to the side of an airplane as it takes flight and performs death-defying leaps as secret agent Ethan Hunt.

The film opens with the Impossible Missions Force (IMF) hijacking a shipment of nerve gas from Chechen separatists.

Soon after, CIA Director Alan Hunley, played by Alec Baldwin, succeeds in shutting down IMF for a total disregard for protocol, which led to the destruction of the Kremlin in the previous film.

The hunters become the hunted when a shadowy organisation known as the Syndicate targets IMF for extinction.

Hunt covertly reunites with colleagues William Brandt and Benji Dunn and computer hacker Luther Stickell to bring down The Syndicate using every gadget, disguise and turbo-charged vehicle at their disposal.

HOT PURSUIT
(12A, 87 mins) Action

OFFICER Rose Cooper – played by Reese Witherspoon – is the laughing stock of San Antonio Police Department. She is scarily intense at work and famously tasered the mayor's son.

Captain Emmett offers Rose a chance at redemption by accompanying Detective Jackson to the home of cartel informant Felipe Riva. Soon after their arrival, masked gunmen open fire and Jackson and Felipe are killed. Rose manages to escape to the garage where Felipe's wife Daniella, played by Sofia Vergara, is hiding. They flee the bullet-riddled crime scene and in order to keep control of the spouse, Rose handcuffs herself to Daniella, which proves a costly mistake as the cop and her prisoner embark on a series of embarrassing misadventures.

THE COBBLER
(12A, 98 mins) Comedy/Drama

MAX Simkin, played by Adam Sandler, harks from four generations of cobblers and owns a shop in a rundown neighbourhood. His father vanished many years ago, leaving Max to single-handedly care for his ageing mother.

A local thug called Leon Ludlow drops off a pair of shoes for repair, but Max's stitching machine breaks down. So he heads into the basement to use his father's old equipment and unexpectedly, when he tries on the hoodlum's footwear, Max becomes Leon.

Any good intentions are hobbled by uneven performances and a script that lacks clear direction and purpose.

By Hannah Stephenson
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

IDEAS: There are a number of ways to help kids to get the gardening bug this summer.

Child's play in summer garden

SCHOOL'S out for summer – but while some parents have every day meticulously planned with activities and time away, others are having 'staycations' and trying to coax their children into the garden.

Your outside space can be a great playground, where kids can be encouraged to take an interest in the natural world around them and in growing some produce of their own.

Some ideas on how to help kids get the gardening bug can be found at www.chilternseeds.co.uk.

Other ideas include making a seed collage. Gather seeds. Find a piece of card or sturdy paper, smother it with craft glue and stick away. Your children can make creative collages using not only seeds but leaves, flowers and garden clippings.

You can try creating a fairytale world. Find a seed tray, some soil, gravel, stones, pebbles or shells, twigs, small plants and perhaps a couple of fairies – or dinosaurs – and let their imagination run wild.

You could use Sagina subulata – a super plant for ground cover which has dainty, fairy-like white flowers – Portulaca grandiflora and Briza maxima, along with a pretty collection of shells and pebbles.

Sow seeds. Some seeds grow really fast, so it's not too late to do a bit of seed sowing with the children.

Try growing salad leaves such as Chard 'Pink Flamingo' which will be ready to eat quickly and might even encourage your children to enjoy salad. Some quick-growing flowers include borage, nasturtiums and Matthiola bicornis.

Make cress heads. To create a good cress head/monster, choose a suitable receptacle such as a plastic cup, yoghurt pot, egg shell, unwanted shoe, or some old laddered tights, fill with moistened cotton wool, compost or kitchen roll, sprinkle the seeds on top, water and wait for nature to do its thing. You will have cress within a matter of days.

Create vegetable animals. If you have an abundance of fruit and veg in the allotment, get your children to create and make a vegetable animal or monster, using produce including potatoes, courgettes and carrots – the more imaginative the better!

Make a mud pie. Give them a large pot, or a spare corner of the garden, a trowel and fork and some soil and leave them to it, although make sure you supervise close by. Add an old plastic tea set and they can create a mud afternoon tea. This may just involve a small amount of mess but children love getting dirty, so it's good to let them every now and again.

Decorate a flower pot. Dig out some old flower pots and let the children decorate them with stickers, paints and glitter - and then grow something in them such as herbs or quick-to-mature micro-greens.

Make some daisy chains. Find a patch with daisies and set the children to work in making the longest daisy chain possible.

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Great day out at fun wild animal parks

Visit one of Kent's most affordable days out, this summer as they celebrate their 40th birthday.

Spot the adorable dhole puppies and other new arrivals around the park and try your hand at crafts and games. Meet the education presenters for fact-filled animal talks and feeds and take part in some special competitions to win fantastic prizes.

Discover the world of conservation, and find out why they have been Kent's most successful wild animal park for the last 40 years. See the largest herd of African elephants in the UK, walk with lemurs, see western lowland gorillas, big cats, small cats, giant anteaters and more.

Weather permitting; test your skills on the exciting treetop challenge – an obstacle course, set high in the trees with rope bridges, tyre curtains, cargo nets and zip wires.

Younger adventurers can enjoy the animal adventure challenge featuring slides, swings and more.

You can also visit Port Lympne Reserve, Kent's only safari park, to enjoy a wild day out.

Spot adorable baby monkey's, bison and other new arrivals and take part in free crafts, games and activities.

ADORABLE: There will be many animals to see at Howletts and Port Lympne.

Port Lympne Reserve is one of the largest wild animal parks in the UK, famous for its wide open spaces and its stunning scenery.

The reserve is home to the authentic African Experience – 100 acres of Kentish savannah, alive with African animals such as critically endangered black rhino and Rothschild giraffe, zebra, wildebeest, ostrich and more. Jump on board a safari truck to experience Africa in Kent and later, explore the many footpaths and walks to meet gorillas, big cats, small cats, primates and other animals.

Plus, enjoy all the activities at no additional cost.

It's a packed day out for a great value price.

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*Subject to availability.

STUNNING: The castle will provide a backdrop for the riders and spectators.

Top weekend for horse riders at castle

AFTER the huge success of last year's event, Chilham Castle will be hosting a weekend of exciting competition when they hold their annual International Horse Trials on the estate on August 8 and 9.

With over 500 international and national competitors, riders will compete in three disciplines culminating in the exciting cross country round. For the first time the CIC 1* dressage class will take place on the big lawn below the castle on Saturday, which provide a stunning backdrop for the international riders and spectators.

Chilham Castle owner and one of the event organisers, Tessa Wheeler, said: "We are so pleased to be able to provide this unique and special opportunity to our riders."

Around the main arena, spectators can grab a bite to eat or visit the craft and trade stands; other activities include a fun dog show on Sunday from 1pm.

The entrance to Chilham Park is off the A252 – follow the signs for the horse trials or the Village Hall. Parking is £10 per car.

For details, visit www.chilhampark.co.uk/events.

See all that Camber Sands has to offer

FUN: There is a wide range of activities.

CAMBER Sands has a wide range of entertainment and activities for you and your family to enjoy.

You can either immerse yourself in the fun and games or just dip in after a day out.

There is so much more to Camber Sands.

The park is situated on New Lydd Road, Camber, East Sussex.

To find out more about what it has to offer, you can call Mark on 07583975349 to arrange a VIP pass for a full tour of the park.

For more information you can also visit their website at www.park-resorts.com/holiday-parks/kent-and-sussex/camber-sands.

Alternatively you can call them on 01797222000.

Fun for everyone over at Eagle Heights

BASED just five minutes from junction 3 of the M25, the Eagle Heights Wildlife Foundation is one of the largest birds of prey centres in the UK. It boasts a wide variety of birds including bald eagles, African fish eagles and vultures.

Eagle Heights is sure to impress everybody, with a number of daily flying displays occurring at the centre. As well as the impressive selection of birds of prey, they also house huskies, meerkats, reptiles, camels and more.

For more information on Eagle Heights and all that they have to offer, visit www,eagle-heights.co.uk, call 01322 866577 or email office@eagleheights.co.uk.

IMPRESSIVE: Birds of prey.

Fun wildlife park is home to more than 200 great species

DIVERSE: There are many different species.

SINCE Wingham Wildlife Park was taken over by its current owners, Tony and Jackie Binskin, it has been able to grow every year.

At the 2015 Kent Excellence in Business Awards they were in the top three finalists for the county's best tourist and hospitality business.

Mrs Binskin said: "2015 was the fourth year in a row where we were the most requested attraction in the My Big Kent Weekend by a pretty big margin, and we hope that everyone will use the great weather which this year has seen to visit us and see for themselves why there's such a buzz about Wingham Wildlife Park."

Wingham Wildlife Park has come a long way since the days of being a bird park and now boasts one of the most diverse cat collections in the country featuring jaguars, pumas, lions, tigers, cheetahs and caracals.

While birds are still ever present in the park – it is home to Kent's only penguins and somewhere you can get nose to beak with flamingos – the collection has diversified to include more than 200 species, more than any other zoo in the county.

The animal numbers are growing from within, with a number of animals, both common and endangered, being born at the park in the first half of the year including penguins, ring tailed lemurs, Pardine Genets snakes and even red pandas.

Speaking about some of the new arrivals, Mr Binskin explains: "The red pandas are on the European studbook and our previous male had been exchanged with Banham Zoo as part of the breeding programme, but before doing so Jasper left his legacy with May Xlang and we are proud to have two babies at our park now."

All of the staff are working hard to gear up for a busy summer.

Hopes are high that the attraction will see an increase in visitors.

Eyes are always looking ahead and there is huge anticipation for the eight ex-laboratory chimps coming from the USA later this year - a project that is very close to everyone's hearts at the park.

Visitors can see the headway being made on the 22,000 square foot retirement home for the ex-laboratory chimps.

For more information about the park and all that it has to offer, you can visit their website at www.winghamwildlifepark.co.uk.

WILDLIFE: There is a collection of 200 British animals in near-natural enclosures

Stunning collection of wildlife to visit

GET the most out of Wildwood with unlimited family visits all year round for just £7 a month, plus when you join as a member your first visit is free.

Wildwood, near Canterbury, is a great day out for all ages where you can see amazing British wildlife past and present. Set in 40 acres of ancient woodland, Wildwood holds a stunning collection of over 200 British animals in near natural enclosures.

See bears, wolves, otters, foxes, deer, badgers, owls, wild horses, lynx, beavers, wild cats, bison, squirrels, wild boar, reindeer and many more as you walk around the twisting trails. Finish your day by letting your kids go wild in an amazing adventure play park featuring Kent's tallest vertical drop slide, zip wire, wild fort, twisting tube slide and tree-top towers, with a special area for under fives.

Join their experts at weekends and school holidays for free close-up animal talks and feeds where you can learn all about the animals, visit the Beaver Lodge Cafe or enjoy a picnic in the spacious picnic area.

For details, visit www.wildwoodtrust.org or call 01227 712 111.

LEGO displayed at very popular museum

POPULAR: The exhibition is a success.

MAIDSTONE Museum is continuing to prove one of the borough's most popular attractions, with visitors of all ages heading to the venue to uncover the history of the region.

The most exciting event to reach the museum for some time is the magnificent Brick City exhibition. The work of acclaimed LEGO® artist, Warren Elsmore, Brick City is appearing at the museum until September 6, with a range of meticulously crafted models of the most iconic landmarks from around the globe.

From the beauty of the Trevi Fountain in Rome to a representation of the Mona Lisa, it is a delight for children of all ages.

Sausage perfect for summer barbeque

SELLING meat online was certainly not in the thoughts of Joseph Christmas Rook in 1965, but here they are today – an online butcher selling over 400 products and delivering throughout the UK.

This year Rook and Sons is celebrating 50 years of trading, starting out with a small shop in Dover. With a strong reputation they steadily grew through to a network of 12 high street shops, selling high quality meat and pies homemade in their own factories in Ramsgate. They continue to operate in a way that maintains a high level of customer service, with special offers, new products, competitions and accreditations.

QUALITY: They sell sausages and pies

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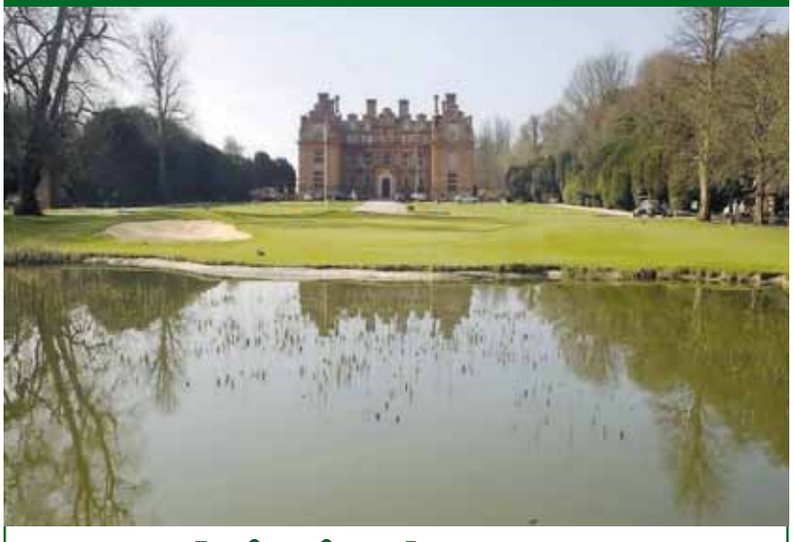

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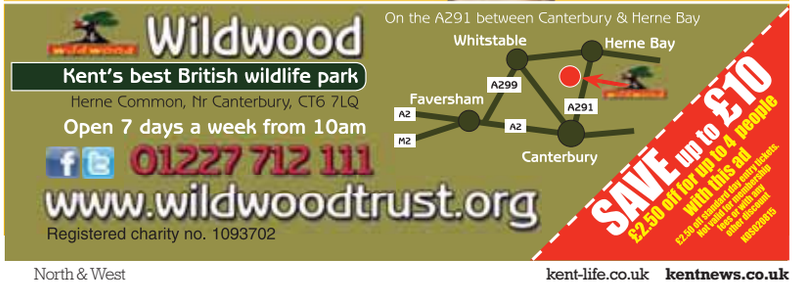

Festival and circus keep kids entertained

LOOKING for something different to do with your children over the holidays?

Millbrook has the answer with their Loving Summer Festival and the arrival of Paulos Circus this August.

With those six long weeks of the holidays underway, many of us are thinking about how on earth we will keep the children entertained.

If you're looking for something different to do that doesn't break the bank, then Millbrook Garden Centre has the answer with their Loving Summer Festival at the Gravesend Garden Centre from August 3 to 14, and Paulos Circus from August 12 at their Staplehurst Garden Centre, and from August 19 at their Gravesend store.

The Loving Summer Festival will enable you to keep the kids entertained whatever the weather. A gorgeous marquee situated among the plants will give shade if it's boiling, shelter if it's raining and grass to picnic and play on all day long.

Come along for a morning, or afternoon, session of craft activities and action packed workshops or make the most of the festival and stay for the whole day and enjoy the free children's activities available around the Garden Centre including the wish leaf tree, doodle hunt and plant a seed activities to delight and surprise children.

Tickets for the festival cost £6 a session, which includes workshop experts, all materials as and free face painting.

For more details you can visit www.millbrookgc.co.uk.

Paulos Circus features clowns, acrobats, aerial silks, jugglers, unicyclists, and many, more amazing acts, this show promises to create unforgettable circus memories for the entire family, young and old alike.

Tickets cost £7 and can be purchased online at shop.millbrookgc.co.uk.

So whatever the weather, Millbrook is the place to be this summer holiday!

FUN: Millbrook is offering activities to keep children entertained.

4 July - 6 September 2015
Admission charge
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Family ticket £10
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Advertising Feature

Dr Who lookalikes in Tunbridge Wells

ENJOY some free summer fun at Royal Victoria Place over the school holidays.

It's time to head to Tunbridge Wells and enjoy some of the great free family events on offer.

So, if your kids are dinosaur crazy or simply love everything Dr Who or Star Wars, then you won't want to miss out on what's happening this summer at Royal Victoria Shopping Centre in Tunbridge Wells.

On July 31 and August 31 Jurassic Fridays will be taking place at 11.30am, 1pm, 2.30pm and 4pm.

Go back in time and experience their incredibly lifelike Jurassic friends Reggie and Toby.

Be amazed by their realistic dinosaur sounds and blinking eyes, but be aware that both Reggie and Toby have a very inquisitive nature and a love for tasty treats!

On August 5 a Weird Science Show with Dr Who Lookalikes event will be taking place at 11am, 1pm and 3pm.

Enjoy double excitement when Dr Who lookalikes David Tennant and Matt Smith team up to provide their amazing weird science show. You will be enthralled as they perform some fun and interactive experiments with very exciting results.

On August 26 a Star Wars fun day will be taking place at 11.30am, 1pm, 2.30pm and 4pm.

LOOKALIKE: There will be Dr Who lookalikes at the event.

Take a flight to another galaxy far, far away with a lookalike Jedi and climb aboard a fan built Star Fighter.

Plus meet lookalike Star Wars characters to include Darth Vader, Stormtroopers and R2D2. Don't forget to bring your camera and "May the Force be with you!"

All of the events are free. Spaces are limited on a first come, first serve basis so please arrive early to avoid disappointment.

For more details about the events on offer you can visit www.royalvictoriaplace.com or find the Concierge on level 2.

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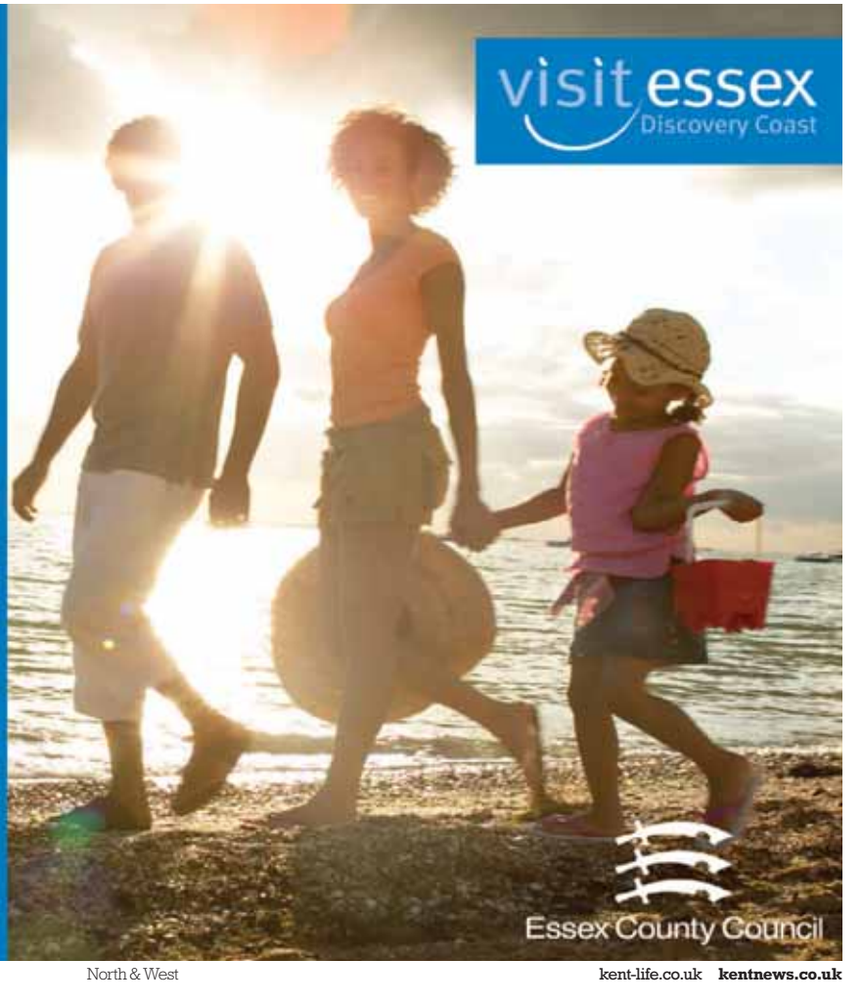

#summerfun

ENJOY SOME FUN!

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2.30pm & 4pm

5 AUGUST
WEIRD SCIENCE SHOW WITH DR WHO LOOKALIKES
11am, 1pm & 3pm

26 AUGUST
STAR WARS FUN DAY
11.30am, 1pm,
2.30pm & 4pm

FIND OUT MORE AT ROYALVICTORIAPLACE.COM

All events are FREE and may be subject to change or cancellation without prior notice. Spaces are limited on a first come, first served basis so please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Events are performed by lookalikes and no infringement of copyright is intended.

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

We must outlaw hunting forever

CHARLOTTE Cooper of the Countryside Alliance is actually to be pitied if she feels "pure exhilaration" at causing so much suffering to animals [KoS, 19.07].

Hunting defenceless creatures is as debasing to humans as it is cruel to hunted wildlife. How she must have been brainwashed as a child.

And it is not surprising that our prime minister tried to weaken the Hunting Act by the back door last week as he was a hunter himself until he got into power. Fortunately, he was defeated. Had he succeeded, it would not have been just foxes hunted, but also deer, stags and hares.

He must listen to the wishes of the 86 per cent of the public who are opposed to bloodsports or he is nothing more than a dictator. Would he bring back bear-baiting and cock-fighting, given the chance? We must not give into the minority of bloodthirsty people who take pleasure in seeing defenceless animals suffer.

As for the arguments that the hounds would be slaughtered if hunting is banned, they are shot anyway by the age of six or if they are not fit enough to work. These dogs are often killed or lose their limbs from oncoming trains when the hunt crosses railway tracks. And children have witnessed their pet cats torn apart by the hunting dogs riding roughshod over people's gardens.

The claim that hunts help keep down the number of foxes is untrue as there is proof that cubs are stolen from their mothers to breed more foxes for this barbaric activity.

So what if jobs would be lost if bloodsports were outlawed? People had to find other means of employment when public executions, slavery and child labour were abolished.

The fox hunting ban must be strengthened, not weakened.

One should consider the words of the great Mahatma Ghandi: "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Vivien Clifford, Deal

Europe exports a valuable peace

CONGRATULATIONS to Anthony Hook for his most eloquent and succinct letter (KoS, June 28) on the subject of peace in Europe.

I am sure that the majority of us agree and that long may it prevail.

Yet some cynics still snipe from the sidelines, complaining that we get insufficient rewards from our EU membership subscription.

Yes, the European project has its faults and there are undeniable differences between some of our co-partners, yet the fact remains that our strength is in unity, which is the greatest value.

Perhaps the concept of peace could catch on globally or even become classified as an invisible export.

AR Newell, Ramsgate

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Simply speeding is not the key problem

ONE of the opening statements in your article about Speed Awareness Courses (KOS, 19.07) said "speed cameras continue to act as a wake-up call for many motorists that the speeds they are travelling at are against the law", maybe so; but that does not mean they are driving dangerously.

There is a vast difference between those that are driving over a speed limit and total recklessness.

We have all driven on roads that one day are 60mph, then the next downgraded to 50, 40, or 30mph without any change in actual road structure or conditions, with downgrades based on purely the whims and fancies of local councillors.

So what is lawful one day, suddenly becomes un-lawful and classed as 'dangerous' the next.

A speed camera can only measure one thing; speed. Drive on the wrong side of the road past one and as long as you are under the posted limit, it declares you are safe.

If speed alone was the only issue, why is 70mph on a motorway not just as safe as 70mph down your high street?

It is obviously not, but it is matching speed to prevailing road conditions that ascertains what is safe. Any speed detection does not take into consideration road conditions at the time, it is just mindless obedience that is demanded, the very opposite to driving safely.

I do not think you could class the selling of 35,000 courses as 'very popular' as you stated, but just a way of fending off endorsements.

Perhaps it is worth repeating the old adage that once an organisation has been formed, its primary objective, becomes its own survival. Who is going to vote themselves out of a job?

Terry Hudson, Whitstable

It's no staycation just great hols

I WISH people would stop using the word staycation to describe holidaying at home, as if it is inferior in preference to going abroad.

So many people would rather have a holiday in the summer in Broadstairs than being pressurised into going somewhere abroad where they don't feel safe, as recent events have shown.

Rosie Johnston, Ightham

Charge drunks using our A&Es

SO the A&E in our hospitals are overcrowded (Kos, last week).

How many of the emergency admissions are drunken (and/or over-dosed) women and men picked up by the police?

They should be charged for their treatment by the hospital.

N Marika Sherwood, Oare

Eurotunnel's poor timing

THE question that I would also like to know is why have Eurotunnel decided, in the height of summer, to do work on the check in plaza?

It forces all the traffic to have join the southbound section of the M20 alongside Operation Stack.

Surely this would have been better organised if works were carried out either early spring or late autumn?

Steve W, via email

So where is our regeneration?

BACK in April, councillor Andrew Bowles, the Tory leader on Sittingbourne council told us in an election pamphlet that the regeneration of Sittingbourne would be well under way by the election on May 7.

Here we are now in August and what's happened?

Well, apart from the billboards which have been up for months saying 'it's here' and which are now falling to pieces, nothing. I wonder why?

Not an electioneering gimmick surely, I thought that was exclusive to the Lib Dems.

Michael Vick, Milton Regis

Use Manston to absorb Stack

GOVERNMENT is not doing enough, if anything at all, to keep Kent moving (KoS, Operation Stack, last week).

The former Manston Airport could take the vehicles leaving the M20, A20, M2 and A2 clear for locals holiday makers and business.

Steve Alexandrou, Thanet

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.

images of kent

East Wear Bay, Folkestone

by **Anita Hirsbrunner from Staplehurst**

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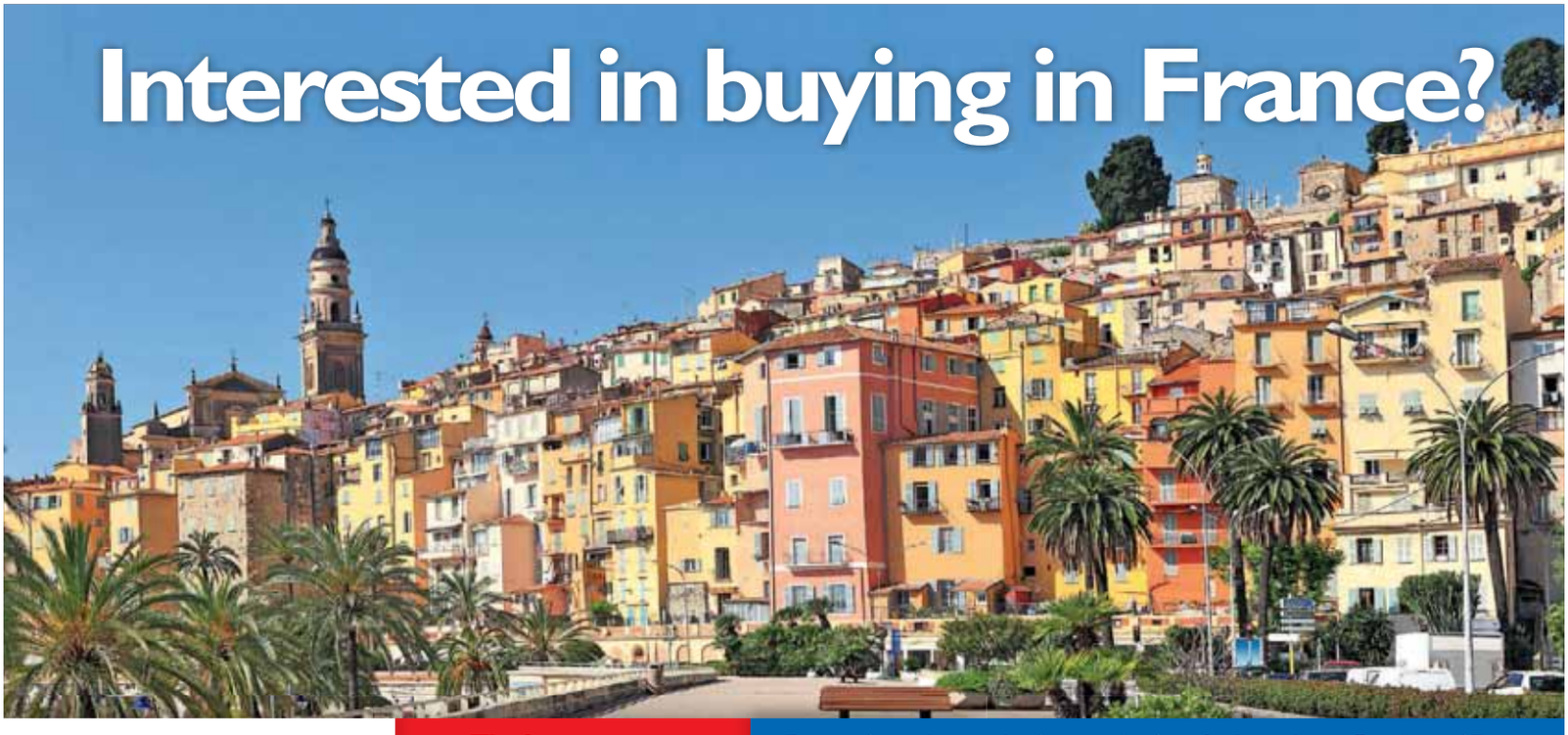
Please note, our relationship with MyFerryLink has now come to an end. We thank them for their long support.



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driving

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

THE POWER OF SEVEN: the Ceed (main picture) launched Kia's unbeaten seven-year warranty, while the Sportage SUV (bottom) is Kia's best seller, the Picanto (inset top) is its city car star and coming soon will be the next Kia Optima (inset below)

Ceed is Kia's lucky charm

BRAND UPDATE: The power of seven has worked for the Korean marque, which has moved from value brand to mainstream star... with aspirations

KIA will soon facelift the stylish second generation Ceed family hatchback – a pivotal model for the ambitious Korean brand.

Some might say it's been Kia's 'lucky seven' car too because the first generation Ceed arrived in 2007, while launching Kia's as yet, unbeaten seven-year/100,000-mile warranty.

And total production figures at the Slovakian factory built specially to make it, passed the seven-figure milestone this year.

It was also the first car in which the then newly-appointed and ex-VW Audi German design supremo, Peter Schreyer, had some input.

He has since transformed the brand image and line-up with cars like the current Sportage, a racy SUV that has recruited many new Kia customers.

Then there's the latest Ceed – good looking in five-door, Sportwagon estate, or sporty three-door Proceed mode – and elegant Carens seven-seat MPV.

Another star is the quirky Soul, described variously as urban crossover, chunky MPV, and family holdall, it is also the 'vehicle' for Kia's first venture into the UK electric car market through the £29,995 Soul EV.

Kia is tipped to attack the high volume company car market soon too with its latest Optima; this Ford Mondeo rival has been a huge hit with Americans, but its appeal to British company car user choosers has been hampered by lowly tax breaks for its diesel engine. Expect Kia to put this right this time and take the Optima upmarket too.

The brand is currently celebrating its best ever half year sales figures: 42,248, up by almost 3.5 per cent on 2014's 40,849.

Sales continue to be led by the Sportage, quite an achievement for a car due for replacement in 2016, and testament to the powers of Mr Schreyer.

The other current sales stars are: the Ceed, the clever and neat Picanto city car, Rio supermini and Venga junior MPV.

» Read more of Steve's motoring reviews in... KENT LIFE

» For more cars visit drive24.co.uk
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Hyundai's classy holdall still hits highs

Santa Fe trail has been a walk in the park for Hyundai – its popular SUV has been a global hit, writes Steve Loader...

SANTA FE 7-ST 2.2 CRDI PRM SE A/T

Price:	from £37,110
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★
Best rival:	Nissan X-Trail

IT'S no surprise to me that Hyundai recently streamlined its third generation Santa Fe line-up and dropped the front-wheel drive versions.

When the current car arrived in 2012, I said the 4x4 variants were the bargains: well-equipped, smart, durable, comfortable and superb value against some esteemed and less reliable rivals with posh badges.

OK, Hyundai is not the 'cheap as chips' marque it once was; prices have risen, but the brand's recent quality hike has been impressive and, even if badge snobs remain unconvinced, hard-nosed post-recession buyers know good cars when they see them.

Hyundai's shift from value to aspirational brand is also shown by the Santa Fe's lightweight/high-strength steel and aluminium body, contributing to deft handling for a car of this bulk.

There is some body roll on the bends, as expected from most SUVs and modest ground clearance says it's not a proper off-roader, but the Santa Fe grips well, with excellent refinement and ride comfort – the chassis engineers have got it about right for UK roads.

Priced from £27,995, you must decide whether you want five or seven seats, but the latter's flexibility is worth the extra £1,150 and should make the car easier to sell, even if the two rearmost berths are a squeeze.

Whichever you choose, turning the cavernous rear into a near-flat floor van is easy thanks to one-touch releases and no lip on the boot opening. Those in the glassy cabin sit up nice and high and there's good stowage, with a well-trimmed and organised dashboard: our flagship Premium SE model comes with leather seats and a massive spec list at £37,110, though all versions have the useful Flex Steer feature.

This allows three steering settings – normal, comfort and sport – and is particularly effective for a larger car, where you want a light touch when parking, but more feedback at higher speeds.

There's just one engine, but it's all most buyers will need: a 197PS (194bhp) version of the 2.2-litre turbodiesel from the previous car and highly capable, even when towing up to the car's maximum 2,500-kilo braked trailer weight.

Hyundai has made the gearbox choice harder though with an effortless and fairly frugal auto, capable of returning 41.5mpg on the official combined cycle against 46.3mpg for the six-speed manual and costing just £565 extra.

The original Santa Fe was Hyundai's first SUV and credited with establishing the Korean marque in America.

A name evoking the famous Santa Fe Trail helped. This gruelling 900-mile Wild West trade route means 'Holy Faith' in Spanish, so you'll understand the 4x4 marketing logic but, should you doubt whether the car can match its rugged namesake, it comes with Hyundai's robust five-year/unlimited mileage warranty.

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 94.2 (3.0), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 88.3 (3.2). CO_2 emissions: 373 - 85g/km.#

Personal contract hire offer on Viva SE 1.0i 75PS in Solar Red, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £690, then 36 monthly rentals of £115. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15,000 over 36 months charged at 7.24ppm. Personal contract hire offer on ADAM SLAM 1.2i 70PS in Greenspotting metallic paint with White My Fire roof colour pack, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £975, then 36 monthly rentals of £195. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15,000 over 36 months charged at 7.31ppm. Personal contract hire offer on New Corsa Excite 1.4 90ps ecoflex a/c in Sovereign Silver, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £620, then 36 monthly rentals of £124. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15,000 over 36 months charged at 6.64ppm.Excess charges also apply if you breach manufacturer servicing or maintenance guidelines or if the car exceeds BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age/mileage when it is returned to Vauxhall Leasing. Package includes Road Fund Licence and Vauxhall Assistance. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Prices and details are subject to change without notice. For full specification and Ts&Cs contact your local Retailer. **You will not own the car**. ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, BS16 3JA. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Offers available on orders or registrations between 2 July and 7 October 2015. #MPG figures are official test data and may not reflect real driving results. Offer applies to pre model year 2016 vehicles only. See Retailer for further details. Correct at time of going to press.

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12	**Citroen C3 Picasso 1.6 VTi Exc** 26,195 miles	£8,400
13	**Citroen DS5 2.0 HDi DStyle 5dr** 35,539 miles	£12,940
14	**Dacia Sandero 1.2 16v Ambiance** 4,373 miles	£6,290
13	**Ford B-Max 1.4 Zetec 5dr** 6,479 miles	£9,900
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62	**Suzuki Swift 1.6 Sport 3dr** 38,854 miles	£8,590
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12	**Toyota Yaris 1.33 VVT-i TR 5dr** 54,399 miles	£6,840
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14	**Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 i 16v Design** 1,098 miles	£8,860
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14	**Vauxhall Mokka 1.4 T Turbo 16v** 16,216 miles	£15,750
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MG3 Fuel consumption mpg (l/100km) for MG3 Range: Urban: 37.7 (7.5), Extra Urban 57.6 (4.9), Combined 48.7 (5.8), CO2 Emissions 136 g/km.

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On the Road Price	£10,795	Optional Final Payment	£4,090.50
Customer Deposit	£187	Mileage per annum	6,000
Manufacturer's Deposit	£1,000	Duration of Agreement	37 months
Total Deposit	£1,187	Interest Rate (Fixed)	3.04%
Amount of Credit	£9,608	APR Representative	5.9%
Interest Charges	£1,225.30		

i30 1.4 S From £12,750

36 monthly payments of	£248.36	Total Amount Payable	£14,232.21
On the Road Price	£12,750	Optional Final Payment	£4,543.25
Customer Deposit	£248	Mileage per annum	6,000
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new reg 65

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

MORE THAN SUPERB BY NAME?: Skoda's all-new Superb luxury flagship

Record sales herald new '65-plate reg change

NEW car registrations have just posted a half year record of 1,376,889 units from January 1 to June 30 – also a seven per cent jump on the same period last year.

The previous record was 1,376,565 over the same months in 2004, and the other good news is that buyers now have a greater appetite for UK-built cars – one in six now has a 'Made in Britain' stamp on it.

The figures come from motor industry mouthpiece, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), which says the continuing boom is due to low interest rates and attractive finance deals, combined with new models featuring the latest technologies, encouraging consumers.

And it is welcome news as the industry braces itself for another surge in demand with the arrival of the '65 reg plate on September 1.

SMMT chief executive Mike Hawes said: "It is still a great time to buy a new car in the UK, and it is encouraging to see more consumers choosing British models. This is important for the wider economy with 799,000 people now employed across the UK automotive sector, including retail.

"We anticipate a flatter second half of the year as the market finds its natural running rate."

SMALL WITH BIG APPEAL: Hyundai's i10 city car star

TOP NOTCH SUPERMINI RIVALS: Toyota Yaris, Vauxhall Corsa and the Renault Clio,

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Fuel consumption MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai range: Urban 25.2 (11.2) - 70.6 (4.0), Extra Urban 38.7 (7.3) - 83.1 (3.4), Combined 32.1 (8.8) - 76.3 (3.7), CO2 Emissions 231 - 96 g/km.
Fuel consumption: figures shown are based on official EU test figures. These are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results. Terms and conditions apply. Vehicles shown for illustration purposes only. Finance subject to status. Over 18's only. Written quotations available on request. A guarantee may be required. Excess mileage charged at 14.9 pence per mile.

Do your homework before buying new car

DON'T accept the first deal on offer – be ready to haggle.

Do ask for trimmings like a tank of fuel, car mats or further discounts or extras.

Don't fall for what seems like a big bargain before you even haggle. It could be an unpopular engine/trim combination or a car on 'run-out' where production ceased a while ago, and might depreciate badly.

Do pick a model that saves fuel, insurance, road tax and depreciation – it isn't getting any easier out there.

Do tread carefully with 'eco' models though - check price, running costs, green credentials and savings on planned mileage versus years of ownership, then compare the closest standard version. The latter's overall savings might surprise you.

Don't assume a diesel will save – you usually pay more upfront for diesel power, so you must cover more miles to claw that money back in fuel economy. And the engines are generally heavier, causing more wear on front tyres and mechanicals.

Meanwhile economy and emissions on small petrol cars have improved and they are often nicer to drive. In short - do your sums.

Do make the most of your part exchange - assuming you are not trading in a banger that the dealer will simply pack off to the nearest auction, it pays to make the most of your old car.

Clean and polish it and replace obvious missing items such as a wheel cover or badge; don't give the salesman an excuse to mark its value down.

And make sure all the paperwork and history is neatly packaged up to go with the car; be critical of your old motor and put right what you can without spending big.

SO MUCH CHOICE: the new Jeep Renegade SUV, versatile yet funky Citroen C4 Cactus, Renault Scenic people carrier, and sporty Alfa Romeo Giulietta show the breadth of models and styles on offer

PEUGEOT 208 ALLURE

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PureTech Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (l/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km) for the New 208 range are: Urban 40.4 – 78.5 (7.0 – 3.6), Extra Urban 61.4 – 104.6 (4.6 – 2.7), Combined 52.3 – 94.2 (5.4 – 3.0) and CO_2 125 – 79 (g/km). MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions. Image shown for illustration purposes only. Model shown is a 208 Hatchback 5 door Allure 1.2L PureTech 82 with 16" Titane Gloss Black Alloys, with metallic paint, Cielo Panoramic Glass Roof and Menthol White exterior personalisation pack at £15,940. Prices quoted are on the road and include delivery to dealership, number plates, 12 months' government vehicle duty and £55 first registration fee. 16" Titane Gloss Black Alloys are available as an option on Allure models only. Cielo Panoramic Glass roof Is available as an option on Active, Allure and GTi models only. Menthol White personalisation is available as an option on Active and Allure models only. Terms and conditions apply, participating dealers only or visit www.peugeot.co.uk. *The first year Road Fund Licence (RFL) is included in the on the road price. The Dealer will provide customers with a cheque equivalent to twice the current RFL cost. The customer must apply for years 2 & 3 RFL. Just Add Fuel (JAF) is subject to status. ^37 month period. *Minimum age 21, 25 or 30 on selected models, maximum age 75. Policyholder must have a minimum of 2 years NCD to use on the vehicle. All drivers must meet eligibility criteria including minimum 2 years' full UK licence, driving convictions/claims limits. Excesses apply. 3 years motor insurance is provided and underwritten by U K Insurance Limited, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. To finance your purchase we will only introduce you to Peugeot Financial Services, the exclusive provider of Just Add Fuel. A guarantee may be required. Peugeot Citroen Retail Group is acting as a credit broker and is not a lender. Finance provided by and written quotations available from PSA Finance UK Ltd t/a Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA. All offers available on qualifying vehicles ordered and registered between 01/08/15 and 30/09/15 or until such time as they may be withdrawn by Peugeot at its complete discretion. Payments will vary according to age, post code and annual mileage. The costs of insurance, servicing and Roadside Assistance are included within the monthly cost of JAF Passport but are provided on a monthly pay-as-you-go basis and can be cancelled at any time without penalty or affecting the remainder of the JAF Passport contract. Excess mileage charges may apply. Routine servicing included only. Excludes wear parts. This offer is not available in Northern Ireland. Calls may be recorded for training purposes. Prices and information correct at time of going to press. Visit peugeot.co.uk for full terms and conditions. Peugeot Motor Company PLC reserve the right to withdraw or amend this offer at any time.

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Superminis now rule the UK... OK?

BRITISH car buyers have learned to love small cars.

For years, the family car dominated sales, then we downshifted to family hatchbacks, and now superminis rule.

The trend has been driven by soaring fuel and insurance costs, greater environmental awareness, punitive road tax on larger cars, plus ever more stylish small cars.

The supermini and even smaller city car now have a 40 per cent share of new car sales, followed by family hatchbacks with around 25 per cent of registrations.

It might not be long though before family hatchbacks retreat from the new kid on the block, the crossover. As the name implies, this straddles several sectors: it's part family hatch, part MPV (multi-purpose vehicle) or people carrier, and part SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle) and is highlighted by cars like the Hyundai ix35, Peugeot 2008 or Renault Captur.

But even this burgeoning sector won't catch the supermini/city car, as it packs so much into a small package.

Even the commonality of the two-box shape – dictated by the need for compact on-road dimensions – can be addressed by ever more imaginative customization: perhaps a roof of a different colour, pattern or decal; special wheels or bespoke door mirrors; or a wild paint job.

Fact is, superminis often look alike, but they don't have to, as proved by the personalization of key models like the Citroen DS3.

STYLE: The opentop Citroen DS3 Cabrio, the coupe-like Alfa Romeo MiTo, or the compact crossover Peugeot 2008

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Motability

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Model shown is AYGO x-cite 5 door 1.0 VVT-i Manual at £11,695. Prices correct at time of going to press. *4.9% APR Representative and £250 Finance Deposit Allowance available on new retail orders of AYGO when ordered between 1st July and 30th September 2015 and registered and financed through Toyota Financial Services by 31st December 2015 on a 42 month AccessToyota (PCP) plan with 0-35% deposit. †1 year's free comprehensive insurance offer is subject to purchase being made via Toyota Financial Services on a Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) only and is available on AYGO models (excluding X grade) when ordered and financed between 1st July and 30th September 2015. Vehicles must be registered by 31st December 2015. All drivers must be aged 21 years and over. Offer is limited to the insured plus up to four additional drivers. The insured and all drivers must have held a full UK driving licence for a minimum of 2 years and had no more than 1 fault claim in the last 3 years. Offer only available to customers with no more than 1 minor motoring conviction in the last 3 years. Standard Toyota Motor Insurance Terms & Conditions apply (available on request) - these will be confirmed in the policy document. Toyota Financial Services (UK) PLC; registered office Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5UZ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s. Other finance offers are available but cannot be used in conjunction with this offer. Excess miles over contracted charged at 8p per mile. Toyota Centres are independent of Toyota Financial Services. Terms and conditions apply. Affordable finance through AccessToyota. 5 year/100,000 mile manufacturer warranty subject to terms and conditions.

AYGO x-cite 5 door 1.0 VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 56.5 (5.0), Extra Urban 78.5 (3.6), Combined 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 Emissions 95g/km. The mpg & CO_2 figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated test results. These are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the cars shown are: urban 40.4 (7)–47.88 (5.9); extra-urban 60.1 (4.7)–70.62 (4); combined 51.4 (5.5)–60.1 (4.7). The official CO_2 emissions are 127–105g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO_2 may vary according to driving styles, road conditions and other factors.

*Clio monthly payment shown based on £2,247 deposit, 36 monthly payments of £149, and an optional final payment of £5,664. Captur monthly payment shown based on £2,087 deposit, 36 monthly payments of £159, and an optional final payment of £7,584. Twingo monthly payment shown based on £575 deposit, 36 monthly payments of £119, and an optional final payment of £5,136. Finance provided by Renault Finance, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Indemnities may be required. Over 18's (excluding the Channel Islands). Terms and conditions apply. Our dealership introduces customers to a limited number of financial providers including Renault Finance. Offer based on 6,000 miles per annum, excess mileage 8p per mile inc VAT. Offers cannot be used with other schemes or finance offers and are available on featured new vehicle when ordered and registered between 1 June 2015 and 30 September 2015. Clio shown has optional Flame Red Renault i.d. metallic paint, available at an additional £595. Excludes Renaultsport, Clio Expression and Twingo Expression models. Captur shown with metallic i.d. paint, available at an additional £495 and painted roof at £399. Twingo shown with optional Powder Blue paint available at an additional £225.

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ALL ROUND MISER: Peugeot's 208 is cheap to run

KOREAN CASH SAVER: check out BlueDrive versions of the Hyundai i30

Saving the wallet ahead of the planet

ECO cars are bought to save cash as much, if not more, than helping to save the planet.

They ease fuel bills and road tax – at least until the Chancellor's new scheme comes into force in 2017.

Until then, tax bandings range from zero for cars with the lowest CO2 emissions (band A – below 100g/km) right up to £505.

Even more crucially, you don't pay anything for low CO2 emitting cars in bands B-D for the first year, but the tax soars higher up the scale so that serious gas guzzlers in the top band, M, attract £1,100 tax in year one.

Anyone spending £50,000-100,000 on a car probably won't fret too much, but most people want to save fuel and tax while also doing their bit for the environment.

Longer term, electric cars may be the answer, but battery technology must catch up and the zero emissions argument for electric is misleading: until we have zero emission power stations, electric cars simply transfer the CO2 and noxious gas output from exhaust pipe to belching chimney.

Hybrids, pairing electric power and batteries with an internal combustion engine are a good halfway house – particularly within the advent of plug-in versions where batteries can be topped up from the household circuit.

There are also conventional 'eco' cars, but these are not always cheap, so shop around and note that if you don't cover enough miles to make fuel savings offset the car's purchase price, conventional alternatives may be a better bet.

Don't ignore petrol models either; concerns about the NOX emissions from diesels, plus the higher price of the engines upfront must be compared with lively new turbocharged small capacity petrol engines with low emissions and consumption.

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Alfa Romeo with EXPO MILANO 2015

Official fuel consumption figures for the Alfa MiTo and Giulietta range: Urban 28.8 – 64.2 mpg (9.8 – 4.4 l/100km); Extra Urban 53.3 – 97.4 mpg (5.3 – 2.9 l/100km); Combined 40.4 – 80.7 mpg (7.0 – 3.5 l/100km). CO_2 emissions 162 – 90g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions.
*Models shown: Alfa MiTo 875cc TB TwinAir 105 hp Progression inc. Special Paint at £475, OTR £14,335. Personal Contract Purchase. [1]Customer deposit £999. Alfa PCP Deposit Contribution £2,000. Optional Final Payment £4,333. Contract Term is 48 months. Alfa Giulietta 1.4 TB 120 hp Progression inc. Special Paint at £510, OTR £18,960. Personal Contract Purchase. ^Customer deposit £1,999. Alfa PCP Deposit Contribution £2,250. Optional Final Payment £5,358. Contract Term is 48 months. Promotion available on vehicles registered by 30th September 2015. ‡Alfa Deposit Contribution only available in conjunction with Alfa Romeo Preferenza PCP. With Alfa Romeo Preferenza you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating Dealers only. We work with a number of creditors including Alfa Romeo Financial Services. Alfa Romeo Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW.

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Official fuel consumption for the Fabia Hatch range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 46.3 (6.1) to 72.4 (3.9); Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2) to 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (4.8) to 83.1 (3.4). CO_2 emissions for the Fabia range are 110 to 88 g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 94.2 (3.0), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 88.3 (3.2). CO_2 emissions: 373 - 85g/km.#

Personal contract hire offer on Viva SE 1.0i 75PS in Solar Red, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £690, then 35 monthly rentals of £115. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15000 over 36 months charged at 7.24ppm. Personal contract hire offer on ADAM SLAM 1.2i 70PS in Greenspotting metallic paint with White My Fire roof colour pack, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £975, then 35 monthly rentals of £195. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15000 over 36 months charged at 7.31ppm. Personal contract hire offer on New Corsa Excite 1.4 90PS a/c in Sovereign Silver, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £620, then 35 monthly rentals of £124. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15000 over 36 months charged at 6.64ppm.Excess charges also apply if you breach manufacturer servicing or maintenance guidelines or if the car exceeds BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age/mileage when it is returned to Vauxhall Leasing. Package includes Road Fund Licence and Vauxhall Assistance. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Prices and details are subject to change without notice. For full specification and Ts&Cs contact your local Retailer. **You will not own the car.** ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, BS16 3JA. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Offers available on orders or registrations between 2 July and 7 October 2015. #MPG figures are official test data and may not reflect real driving results. Offer applies to pre model year 2016 vehicles only. See Retailer for further details. Correct at time of going to press.

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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Viva range: Urban: 50.4 (5.6) – 52.3 (5.4), Extra-urban: 72.4 (3.9) – 76.3 (3.7), Combined: 62.8 (4.5) – 65.7 (4.3). CO_2 emissions: 104 – 99g/km.#

*Model shown VIVA SE 1.0i (75PS) £7,995 with optional metallic paint £545. Total OTR cost £8,540. Offers available on orders or registrations between 19 June and 7 October 2015. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. Offer applies to pre model year 2016 vehicles only. See Retailer for further details. Prices and specifications correct at time of going to press.

Make the road test count?

ROAD testing your chosen new car is crucial before you sign the paperwork – you have plenty of time to regret a hasty purchase.

Our top tips:

Book early. New Reg is a busy time for dealers, so map out a 'test drive campaign' to drive your candidate models soon after one another, for more accurate comparisons. You are helped here by many dealers choosing 'motor city' sites like Broad Oak at Canterbury, Ashford's Orbital Park and Dowding Way, Tunbridge Wells - you can get from one dealer to another quickly.

Don't be hurried. Yes, it is a busy period, but insist on enough time to drive the car in all situations: in town traffic, on the motorway – or some high speed cruising at least – and on less well-maintained rural roads. An hour should be sufficient – if you avoid getting stuck in a jam.

What are you looking for? Experience of different road surfaces, highlighting seating and ride comfort issues, plus engine, wind, tyre and mechanical noise. And especially...

Do you like the controls? It used to be easy to switch from one car to another and quickly find your way around the dashboard, but many carmakers are now going their own way in search of the best ergonomics or human interaction, but they don't suit everyone. Just one bone of contention is the electronic handbrake and the many different installations.

Is it the right spec? Try to get a test car as close to the one you are interested in, even if you have to wait a few days extra or go to another dealership.

Make it a family outing. It can be a painful process of 'are we there yet?' proportions, but try to get as many of the would-be car users involved in the test drive – drivers and non-drivers. It can answer questions about comfort and visibility in the rear and, specifically, is there really room for three across the back seat, especially if one place has to take a strap-in child seat or booster as well? Also, can you lift shopping in and out of the boot easily or indeed, is there much of a boot?

Don't feel pressured. Whether you have one or several candidates to check out, don't sit down and sign on the dotted line immediately. Go away and weigh your thoughts; maybe leave the salesman with a reason to be cheerful by asking whether it would be OK to come back later for another test drive. If the reaction is not good then you've learned something there too!

WHICH HORSE IS RIGHT FOR YOUR COURSE: the Renault Captur crossover, Skoda Yeti SUV, or Hyundai i20 supermini?

holidays

Call
01895 83 33 33
for bookings
and information

4 NIGHTS MON-FRI		3 NIGHTS FRI-MON	
10 Aug	£139pp	7 Aug	£109pp
31 Aug	£139pp	14 Aug	£109pp

Grand Burstin Hotel, Folkestone

August, 2015 • 3 or 4 nights half board, from £**109**pp • Quote: GB-KOS

The Grand Burstin Hotel is set in a prime position overlooking Folkestone Harbour. It is renowned as one of the UK's top entertainment hotels, so you can relax, dine in style and be entertained all under one roof. Cabaret shows are performed every evening - fantastic entertainment for all ages! The Spindles Health Club has an indoor heated Swimming pool, sauna and a state of the art gym (£4 per session payable on site).

INCLUDED: 3 or 4 nights sharing a twin/double-bedded en suite room • Breakfast and dinner each day • Entertainment every night • Free wifi

4 NIGHTS MON-FRI	
10 August	£139pp
24 August	£139pp
7 September	£139pp
21 September	£139pp
5 October	£139pp
12 October	£139pp
19 October	£139pp
26 October	£139pp

Bosworth Hall Hotel, Leicestershire

August to October, 2015 • 4 nights half board, £**139**pp • Quote: BS-KOS

Enjoy a great value, relaxing summer break at Bosworth Hall Hotel, set in 11 acres of landscaped gardens in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. The hotel has a leisure club with an indoor pool, gym, tennis courts, bike hire and more - extra charge applies. There's plenty to see and do within a short drive of Market Bosworth; Twycross Zoo, West Midlands Safari Park and Drayton Manor Park are close by.

INCLUDED: 4 nights stay at Bosworth Hall Hotel sharing a twin/double bedded room with en-suite facilities • 4 dinners and 4 breakfasts

Summer Self-Drive Deals - Sand Bay Holiday Village, Somerset

3 nights weekend - Fridays:	**7, 14, 21 & 28**	**August, 2015**	**£99pp**	**Quote PK8-KOS**
4 nights midweek - Mondays:	**10, 17, 24 & 31**	**August, 2015**	**£129pp**	**Quote PK8-KOS**
4 nights midweek - Mondays:	**7, 14, 21 & 28**	**September, 2015**	**£119pp**	**Quote PK9-KOS**

Sand Bay is set on the north Somerset coast near Weston-super-Mare. The resort has a beautiful open landscape with plenty of green grass to stroll on and relaxing seating areas. Part of the Pontins family, you can be assured of good food and entertainment.

INCLUDED: 3 or 4 nights stay in a standard chalet • Breakfasts and dinners • Live nightly entertainment

Christmas Cracker Party through the Decades

20 November, 2015 • 3 nights half board-plus, £**129**pp • Quote: CC11-KOS

Join us for an over 40s Christmas party weekend to remember as we re-wind the decades and go back to the 60s, 70s and 80s at Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Enjoy live music from original 70s band Brotherhood of Man, 60s rockers The Swinging Blue Jeans and the new touring show Whitney – Queen of The Night. Add 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrade available • Towels & linen

Carry on New Year Party at Bosworth Hall

29 January, 2016 • 2 nights half board-plus, £**119**pp • Quote: BW1-KOS

Extend your New Year celebrations at Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. Our popular private party weekends have become a must-do annual event with guests returning year after year. We've arranged a super entertainment line-up for our Party Break, including tributes to Frankie Valli, The Eagles and Kenny & Dolly. You will also enjoy 2-for-1 drinks both nights.

INCLUDED: 2-for-1 drinks from 7pm to 11pm both nights • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • Full programme of live entertainment both nights • Free use of leisure facilities (indoor pool & gym)

We Love the 60s Spring Party Weekend

11 March, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, £**129**pp • Quote: PS3-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Spring Party - for over 40s only - to blow away the winter cobwebs. We've lined up a brilliant entertainment showbill featuring The Ivy League, The Merseybeats and The Pacemakers plus tributes to The Beach Boys and The Beatles. With non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and free drinks every night, this is one party weekend you're sure to love.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Full 60s theme entertainment programme • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - upgrade available

Back to the 60s Carry on New Year Party

8 January, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, from £**229**pp • Quote: BP1-2-KOS

Too busy to do the New Year in December? Join us for a private party at Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel on the Isle of Wight as we extend the New Year festivities into January and take you on a trip down memory lane back to the 1960s. Our exclusive weekend, designed specially for the over 40s generation, includes a gala New Year's Eve party, complete with Big Ben countdown to midnight and a Best of British sing- a-long with all the old favourites including Land of Hope and Glory and Auld Lang Syne. PLUS there are Free Drinks every night from 6pm-midnight to help the party go with a swing. The entertainment line-up features authentic 60s Bands The Fourmost and Union Gap, plus a tribute to Dusty Springfield with Maxine Mazumder.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - beers - house lager, bitter and cider; branded spirits including Smirnoff, Bacardi, Bells, Gordon's Gin, Courvoisier, Lambs Navy Rum, Martini & Harveys Bristol Cream Sherry; wine by the glass; draught soft drinks and cordials • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • 1960s themed live nightly entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades to main hotel available • Return car ferry crossing Portsmouth-Fishbourne or Lymington-Yarmouth

Optional Come Dancing Party Package

Just £**50**pp extra • Quote: BP1-3-KOS

Fans of Strictly Come Dancing and dance enthusiasts can add dance tuition, dance cabaret, social dancing, a Gala Ball and much more to this special weekend at Bembridge. Richard Still and Morgan Hemphill, 6 Times UK Ten Dance Champions, will demonstrate for us on the Friday and Saturday evenings and provide a mini Latin workshop on Saturday afternoon. There are reserved tables and seating exclusively for a maximum of 200 dance guests. Tuition - up to 8 hours - is by Philip Wylie of Ballroom & Latin Dance specialists **Holiday & Dance**.

Private Events - You cannot book these self-drive breaks direct with the hotels/resorts

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Women Seeking

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RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 4288 Box No: 418117**

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243**

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 4298 Box No: 418167**

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793**

ANN, young looking 40yrs seeks broadminded man of any age/location for no strings discreet times, games and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 4290 Box No: 412369**

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0906 515 4291 Box No: 366019**

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603**

FEMALE seeking male for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413809**

SAMANTHA, solvent, sensual business women, 38yrs, travels a lot and seeks fun on the road. I'm married so please be discreet. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4495859**

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably, older, N/S male with own car. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537**

JASMINE, 22yrs, seeks older gent for daytime meetings as she works a nightshift most days. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4495860**

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383**

CAROLINE, sophisticated feminine lady, just turned 40 and wants to meet new friends. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4656850**

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127**

CLARE, 29, works abroad but back for a few weeks, seeking new men friends. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4646634**

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874**

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025**

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349**

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50's, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTM professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569**

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349**

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517**

ALISON 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416497**

DEBORAH 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515**

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215**

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211**

SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171**

JACKIE 32, attractive professional, very smart and feminine, long brown hair, seeks smart, confident, older male who knows how to treat a lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416297**

BECKY 23, classy blonde, long blonde hair, blue eyes seeks loving older guy to spoil and pamper her. Discretion assured/guaranteed. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416233**

LINDA 26, cheeky, curvy brunette, a little shy at first, likes to look after herself, seeks dark haired male for discreet naughty but fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416195**

TERESA 39, petite, cuddly and bubbly seeks kind older male to travel, have fun, and take care of, pamper and flirt with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416081**

LUCY stunning tall brunette, looking for exciting times, seeks likeminded, adventurous male who is willing to try anything once or maybe even twice! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416079**

PETITE blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077**

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841**

ANGIE attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being sociable, meals in/out, WLTM honest, fun male for possible ltr. looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827**

LISA attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549**

SUE 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTM kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735**

BLONDE female, 47, looking for fun, sensual, experienced, understanding, seeking similar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415675**

INTELLIGENT funny guy without a huge ego required for damaged heart. Casey 39, size 10, curves in all the right paces, pretty, kind, loving, genuine, romantic and available. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415509**

BLACK lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out, walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477**

JENNY voluptuous blonde tanned well-presented female, enjoys being and giving pampering, cooking, cosy nights, looking for some broadminded excitement. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415399**

JOYCE 39, attractive GSOH, loves nights out, honest, loyal, fun to be with, looking for mature male for adult companionship, meals out and hopefully more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415561**

NICOLETTE 32 petite professional attractive black female looking for similar hardworking white male who like me loves life and is serious about finding a LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415545**

PAT blonde blue eyed curvy, cuddly female, attractive, likes swimming, gardening, holidays, my job/home, looking for happiness with quiet content grounded male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415533**

Men Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 oer message received. mydate24

RICHARD 63, N/S, clean-shaven, likes meals out, days out, classic cars, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418517**

JOHN young 50, tall, slim, hardworking, seeking business/professional female for discreet meetings, can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418461**

JONATHAN good looking, considerate, long curly hair, N/S, seeks tall, slim female, 30-45. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418451**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

YOUNG 64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539**

ASHFORD male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks likeminded female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845**

55YR old male, 5ft 9ins, slim, likes swimming, pool, seeking female for fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418265**

COME dine with me. Attractive black British male 50 yrs, 6ft, medium building, working, GSOH, romantic and genuine WLTM similar female. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4763687**

COMPANION sought, 50-60's by slim, young looking 65yr old man for cinema, music, eating, drinking, talking and laughter. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418257**

JOHN nice looking, brown curly hair, gentle, understanding, seeks tall, slim lady for daytime no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418207**

BRIAN happy go lucky, genuine, loving, likes nights in, DVDs, meals out, seeking genuine lady for loving, caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418197**

MALE widower, N/S, likes reading, walking, WLTM lady 50-70 for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418173**

PETE 49, slim, 5ft 7in s, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421**

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077**

MALE widower, N/S, seeks buxom lady, 50-70, likes reading, 60's music, pub quizzes and crosswords. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417905**

BRIAN 71, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, music, walks, seeks female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417697**

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789**

MALE 71, Tidy, OHAC WLTM Lady late 60s early70s for easy friendship. Likes animals. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4757205**

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195**

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985**

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970**

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013**

YOUNG 60yr old male, knows how to treat a lady, seeking special lady to spoil for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417909**

GOOD looking fit male, romantic kind and passionate, with lots of love to give WLTM a mature lady 55 to 65 for LTR. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4760779**

MICK 50, seeks attractive female for nice times out, genuine calls only. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417691**

ROAD worker looking for fun times and hopefully more. Great sense of humour. Laughs a lot. Looking for the same in lady. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4753610**

ROCKABILLY guy, seeks rock chick, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750**

MALE 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212**

ANDY 5ft 5ins, retired, 69, solvent, likes most things, meals out, holidays, golf, swimming, GSOH, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417821**

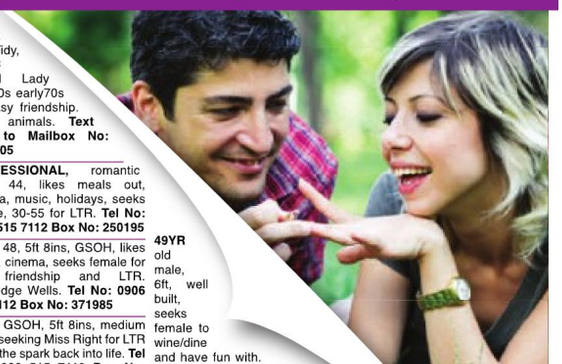
67YR old male, slim, 5ft 5ins, many interests, likes holidays, meals out, seeking slim female 55-65 with GSOH to share TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414023**

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for wining, dining and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787**

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397**

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719**

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175**



49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929**

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015**

HAPPY go lucky guy 62, GSOH, seeks fun loving lady, 48-65 for coastal walks, lunches and fun days out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417707**

BRIAN 71, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, music, walks, seeks female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417697**

MICK 50, seeks attractive female for nice times out, genuine calls only. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417691**

ROCKABILLY guy, seeks rock chick, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

JACK 47, tall, good-looking, average build, GSOH, seeks broadminded female for discreet no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416867**

MIKE Canterbury mature male, seeks single mum/lady, 28-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

CARING man enjoys going out, looking for someone to take out and have a laugh and to share some nights in! **Text only to Mailbox No: 4736191**

ED, retired Essex guy, astute & wise. N/S. no ties, with looks & humour seeks younger female needing life's mentor/tutor. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4485189**

GENUINE fun sexy healthy guy 55, with no ties, looking to date attractive lady 45/57 for fun times and more. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4717147**

GARETH handsome 40's pilot, strong tall build, seeks daytime discreet passion with lady 30-65. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414421**

KIND, tall, medium build, smart, easy going widower, 71 WLM Lady 60s early 70s, for easy going friendship OHAC. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4641218**

Gay Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 oer message received.

GAY male 54 years old, seeks gay male 40 to 42 years old for 121 long lasting relationship. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4732986**

BI male, slim, passive, seeks older bi M, 75- 90, for gentle fun and friendship. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4398888**

MAIDSTONE bi male, clean-shaven, N/S, seeks similar bi male, N/S for meetings. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416737**

PASSIVE male, 60, overweight seeks assertive male for daytime fun, cannot accommodate. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4321273**

LOOK FORWARD TO THE WEEKEND!
FIND PEOPLE NEAR YOU LOOKING FOR LOVE AND LAUGHTER

All messages received £1.50. Text STOP to 89990 to exit at any time Minimum 7 messages must be sent before contact details can be exchanged. This service is not computer generated. Messages are responded to by real service users. No meetings can be guaranteed. If arranging a meeting be sure to chose a public space and do not give personal details to people you have not met. Service provided by No Goats Ltd. Help: 0207 720 7130 or email: support@jmedia.co.uk

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Alternatively, please contact Justine Whittle, HR Assistant
Telephone: 01304 245943
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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE
LICENSING ACT 2003 – Section 17

An application has been validated for the premises: **The Fancy Goat of 40 High Street, West Malling, Kent ME19 6QR**
Date:15.07.15
Summary of the proposal licensable activities and the proposed hours of opening :
To allow Plays; Films; Indoor Sporting Events; Live Music; Recorded Music; Performances of Dance and Sale of Alcohol from 07:00 hours until 01:00 hours Monday to Sunday.
To allow Late Night Refreshment from 23:00 hours to 01:00 hours Monday to Sunday.
Any person wishing to view details of an application can contact the licensing team on 01732 876368
Any person wishing to make representation about the proposals should make them in writing to:
Licensing Services, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4LZ
Licensing.services@tmbc.gov.uk
Notice to be displayed for 28 days from 15.07.2015 to 13.08.2015
It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary of conviction for the offence is £5000.

LICENSING ACT 2003
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A VARIATION OF A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that.

Karen Ann Kerly of 83 Selsea Avenue, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 85D

Has applied to Canterbury City Council for the VARIATION of Premises license to sell alcohol between the hours of 11:00 to 22:30. Live music Saturday nights. Opening days Tuesday to Sunday.

For the premises- The Stable bar and coffee lounge situated at 108 High Street (Entrance Beach Street) Herne Bay. Kent CT6 5JY.

As a register of licensing applications can be inspected at http:/www.canterbury.gov.uk/licensing or at Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1YW. Tel 01227 862000 by appointment with the licensing team between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

Any person wishing to submit representations to my/our application must give notice writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objections by 18-08-2015.

LICENSING ACT 2003:
Application for Premises Licence

Take notice that Joel Singh has made an application in accordance with the licensing act 2003 for a premises licence for Bollywood, 11 Canterbury Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5TP.

The application is for the sale of alcohol.

This application has been made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR. Full details of the application and plans can be viewed at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR during normal hours of business.

Any interested party who wishes to make representation about this application should do so in writing to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR or by sending an email to licensing@medway.gov.uk no later than 25th August 2015.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make false statement in connection with an application which, upon conviction, carries a maximum fine of £5,000.

Margate gear up for change in class

The Blues are on the rise according to gaffer Terry Brown

CONFIDENT: Brown reckons his boys can take the league by storm

Picture: DON WALKER

Football

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

PROMOTION to the Vanarama National League South isn't daunting to Margate FC's manager Terry Brown, who told KoS that it offers up a number of opportunities for the club.

The Blues have had a solid pre-season, taking convincing wins throughout their friendlies.

It has buoyed the team, according to the gaffer.

Brown told KoS: "Overall I've been really pleased with how pre-season has progressed. The boys have been playing brilliantly, and everyone has been gelling as a team and working together nicely.

"We've remained unbeaten throughout which has been good because it gives the boys a nice boost, it gives the team confidence as we go up to the new league."

Brown says that pre-season has given him a chance to get comfortable with the new team members as well, but that there is still work to do when the season starts for them on August 8.

He said: "One of the things a manager does during pre-season is to get to grips with the new boys who've joined. It's a good time to figure them out, and get them integrated into the team.

"I've had a good chance to do that, and we've been playing fairly comfortably, but I still haven't decided exactly who will be playing in which position. There's still a bit of work to do as we go forward."

The Blues are likely to find the first week of the new season a baptism of fire, taking on some big names in the Vanarama National League South.

The manager added: " There's no doubt the first week will be tough. We'll be going up against two of last year's play-off teams, with three hard games straight away.

"I think the only team which would have been tougher to play at the start of the season would have been Ebbsfleet.

"I'm confident though, as the team is looking really good, and I've been given a great budget, and one which is certainly competitive for the league we're in."

That confidence, according to Brown, has been strengthened by the fact that the club is on the rise elsewhere too.

He said: "The club has changed from a poor, rundown club into one of the major players. I'm expecting great things this season."

Play 'smarter' for 50-over Cup says Adams

KENT County Cricket Club head coach Jimmy Adams says the team need to play 'smarter' as they get stuck into the season's Royal London One-Day Cup.

Adams said that the switch from T20 Blast, which the team have performed brilliantly in, to the longer form of the 50-over one-day competition required a different style of play.

He said: "Potentially, the top-order batsmen have 300 balls to face instead of 120 and, conversely, the bowlers have 10-over allocations instead of only four. Whenever you add a time element to a game the players inevitably have to make more decisions and choices.

"So players will be asked to be smarter, because that added time is such a big factor. Different skills are required, yes, but one of the biggest is to stop and think and to apply that element of extra time when they're out there in the middle and under pressure."

CONFIDENCE: Adams says Kent could do well in the cup format

The coach said his players were looking to keep their winning ways in the shorter form of the game, as well as building on the success they saw last year when Kent made it through to the cup's semi-finals.

He said there were reasons to be optimistic Kent could continue its run of T20 wins in the One-Day Cup, saying the team had enough potential match winners, as well as solid experience.

Adams said: "It will be another big challenge, because all the sides we come up against in our group are good teams, but our players are a year older and wiser now, so to my mind there's no reason why we shouldn't be looking to do well in this competition."

Sport Shorts

» Email **sports@kosmedia.co.uk** or call **Jamie Weir** on **01233 653481**

HAPPY: Edinburgh is pleased with the squad's staying power

Scally hit with £75,000 fine after misconduct

GILLS boss Paul Scally as well as the club itself have been fined £75,000 each after FA misconduct charges against them were found proven following the firing of former player Mark McCammon.

Both the club, and the Gills chairman, who has also been ordered to attend an 'education programme', received the penalty after being found to have failed to act in the best interests of football, and for bringing the game into disrepute.

The ruling followed an Employment Tribunal decision which held that Mr McCammon had been unfairly dismissed by Gillingham and that the dismissal was an act of race victimisation by Mr Scally and the club.

Mr Scally released a statement after the ruling saying he would appeal.

He said: "I am shocked, stunned and angered by this decision, as are my staff. The level of these sanctions is manifestly excessive, totally disproportionate and completely unjust. We have been given no reasoned explanation for the severity."

SUMMER: Thanet's excited about its summer of sports

Beach sports summer spectacular in Thanet

BEACH tennis and volleyball on Margate's main sands are setting the scene for a summer of sport in Thanet.

The town will be hosting the fourth British Open ITF G4 Beach Tennis Championships on August 9 with the Margate Masters volleyball finals taking place the weekend after, on August 15 and 16.

The sporting events are something Thanet District Council is pleased to be hosting.

Cabinet member Lin Fairbrass said: "It is set to be a great event and will be exciting for those who have never seen the sport played before. To host this, and the Margate Masters beach volleyball finals is testament to the efforts of all involved in attracting new and exciting events to Thanet."

Beach Tennis UK's Kasia Chmielewska said: "The beach tennis event in Margate is a fantastic opportunity to bring this new and exciting sport to this part of the UK. It's a sport anyone can play of any age and ability, and has great health benefits."

Tankerton FC hunt new manager

TANKERTON FC are looking for a new first team manager for their Kent County League Division 3 side.

The club says that it wants a new boss in place ahead of the start of the new season.

It is also looking to bolster its range of players for a new club gaffer to choose from, with a recruitment drive that's aiming to pick up some more experienced and well-rounded team members.

The club says that player-managers would be considered in their hunt for a new boss, who will also need to be available for Saturday afternoons.

Anyone who is interested should call Tim Elgar 07542772588 or Martin Mills on 07932 103610.

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